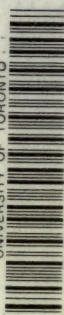


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I

THE KANTIAN AND LUTHERAN ELEMENTS
IN RITSCHL'S CONCEPTION OF GOD

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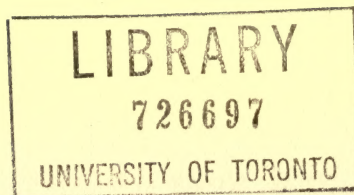
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PREFACE.

The theology which to-day occupies the most prominent place in Germany, and which is also making its way into England and America, is the theology developed by Albrecht Ritschl and expounded with various modification by his immediate followers, as Harnack, Kaftan, and Hermann. To give a brief analysis of some of the fundamental elements in the conception of God central in this theology is the purpose of this dissertation.

At the beginning of the Reformation, Luther, who took the initiative in that movement, hardly perceived the need of a new, thorough-going theology. Melanethon's "*Loci Communes*," which appeared late in 1521, had Luther's unqualified approval. Of this work he says "A little book worthy not only of immortality, but of any ecclesiastical canon."¹ But when examined it is found that for the most part it emphasizes the religious elements in Christianity and is designed more to develop a simple pious life than to present theological truths in an all-embracing system. Luther himself, at first at least, had no thought of a new church. He simply held a few principles tenaciously, but because he did so hold them, the events which his attitude occasioned made a new church the necessary consequence. Other men with more logical minds than his saw the drift of affairs and recognized the need of a new, completely articulated theology which should on the one hand afford a bulwark against the teaching of the old established Catholic Church, and on the other hand meet the needs of pious supporters of the new movement. This recognition shows itself clearly in the later editions of the "*Loci Communes*," and with them the new theological development was begun.

As the years passed, however, the problem assumed new shape. Early in the seventeenth century efforts were put forth to secure a union of the Reformed and Lutheran churches and later with

¹ Köstlin : "Theology of Luther," Vol. II., p. 229.

Leibnitz this movement took new shape in the effort to unite all, both Protestants and Catholics, upon a modified platform. Still further, the rising tide of new thought which the centuries developed outside of Christianity could not be altogether ignored. Little by little discrepancies appeared even between the Protestant Christian teaching and the newer learning. In consequence of this there developed on the one hand an apologetic comparable with that in the early centuries of the Christian era, and on the other hand, there was an appropriation, frequently ungrateful, of the results of the newer experiences which life was continually presenting. This has continued down to very modern times.

In this development, confining attention simply to Germany, some great names appear, the names of men who guided, who opposed, who appropriated, and who determined either by opposing or by fostering, the particular course theology has taken since Luther's time. To mention Osiander, Calovius, Calixtus, and Schleiermacher greatest of all, is sufficient to bring to mind somewhat of the "storm and stress" period of German theological development. In direct descent from these, and indeed the latest and at present most influential through his works is Albrecht Ritschl [1822-1889], Professor of Theology at Bonn [1846-1864] and at Göttingen [1864-1889].

The problem Ritschl faced was slightly different from that of his predecessors. The union aimed at early in the seventeenth century was realized in 1817 when the Reformed and Lutheran churches in Prussia were formally united under the name of the Evangelical Church. Ritschl's father was heartily in sympathy with this movement, and gave much of his time and thought to perfecting the amalgamation, but the union remained in large part formal. Indeed, about the year 1850 another movement started which aimed at a rehabilitation of the Lutheran church as an independent religious body. Albrecht Ritschl saw that if the union were to become vital and permanent, there must be a return to the sources of the two streams, for only so could an inner harmony be discovered sufficient to build a stable church on. Still further, he felt the play of new forces upon himself from outside

Christian circles and could not altogether turn his back upon them. He was scientific in the temper of his mind. Early in his career he was a Hegelian of the Baur of Tübingen type, and in consequence advocated the "tendence" theory of studying history, which distorted rather than illuminated the course of human events. Later he moved away from the Hegelian influence and in his "Rise of the Old Catholic Church" [1857] he gave a presentation of that early period which conformed more nearly to strict scientific canons.

Ritschl was also very much out of conceit with Neoplatonism, though it was more against the Mysticism which that type of philosophy had fostered that his fulminations were especially directed. This disgust with Neoplatonism appears prominently in his "History of Pietism," one of his chief works. It was not unnatural, then, but exceedingly natural, that when Ritschl sought to construct a theology of his own, he should turn to that type of philosophic thought which was most in harmony with his scientific temper of mind, and apparently farthest removed from Neoplatonism and Mysticism, viz., the Kantian philosophy. No one of Kant's successors is so nearly in agreement with the strict scientific thought of to-day as Kant himself. It is true that Ritschl for his metaphysics turns consciously to Aristotle, and that he also makes large use of Lotze, but the Kantian influence is strong, as will be pointed out later.

Another influence that played upon Ritschl was the spirit of nationalism which was potent in Germany from 1848 until 1870. The comparative homogeneity of the civilized world at the dawn of the Christian era was shattered by the movements of the northern barbarians from the fifth century on. There emerged from the chaos then produced two contending forces, the Church and the rehabilitated Empire, each claiming supremacy. At first the Church won, and exercised practically absolute rule over Europe through Pope Innocent III. [1198-1216]. But real power did not lie with the Church. Gradually different centers established themselves representing in more modern times the phenomenon of the growth of independent nationalities. Ger-

many did not feel this movement so early as did other nations. Or better, the feeling of individuality was so strong in Germany that there was for a long time no basis for coöperative association. But after the Napoleonic era the spirit of nationalism awoke there as in other parts of Europe earlier, and is to-day the prevailing tendency. As a native of Prussia Ritschl could not help being interested in the extending influence of that State. In 1847 he "saw no other chance for peace in Germany than that the king" [of Prussia] "should finally make earnest with a constitution and thereby place himself at the head of Germany."¹ Other utterances just preceding the final consolidation of the German States indicate that on the whole he was in sympathy with the national movement.² The same really shows itself in his "Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung." He maintains that Christianity should be national, that is, that the form the Christian religious life takes should fit the nation³ as a whole. This is, of course, in line with the situation he faced, viz., an established State church, in the service of which he found himself and for the advancement of which he was laboring.⁴ He had his larger view, that of the Kingdom of God, but the nations in the western world as a whole were to be taken up as units into the larger conception. What more natural, then, than that he should make his own presentation of Christian truth national? The material lay right at hand. There was Luther, the great hero of the German Reformation, highly honored by every patriotic Protestant German, and there was the German philosophical development of nearly a hundred years with Kant at its head. Especially inviting was such a course since at that very time, the second half of the nineteenth century, the revived study of Kant was beginning to dominate every circle. The educated German of to-day feels that a new culture has grown up in modern times worthy to be compared with, rather than to be thought dependent upon, the ancient

¹ Otto Ritschl : "Albrecht Ritschls Leben," Vol. I., p. 140.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. II., p. 33.

³ Ritschl : "Rech. u. Ver.," Eng. III., pp. 134-135.

⁴ See Chapter V., p. 92.

Greek and Latin culture. Ritschl's work may be viewed as evidencing in part this same feeling.

One may also feel justified in the opinion that Ritschl himself realized that his own thinking along religious lines was not exactly what had always been held. No vigorous thinker in working over material handed down from the past fails to make some contribution of his own. This is true along distinctively secular lines, it is true along religious and theological lines. But in the latter case the religious conservatism, always strong, demands that the new shall wear the garb of the old. Consequently, just as Luther turned back to Augustine and the early Church fathers, and as the seceding members of the Catholic Church in Germany after 1870 turned back to earlier times, so Ritschl felt it imperative to connect his thought with the "Golden Age" of Protestant Germany, as popularly viewed. And this was wise, for there is seldom a worthful step in advance taken without a proper recognition of the past. No single individual suited Ritschl's purpose better than Luther, between whom and the other reformers religiously there was an inner harmony, and who figured in the popular mind of Protestant Germany as one of the great national heroes.

To summarize briefly : Ritschl was in part the child of his own age. He felt the currents of modern scientific thought, together with the spirit of nationalism and the need of getting at an inner harmony between the two component parts of the Evangelical Church. He also felt that his own thought diverged somewhat from commonly accepted theological views, and that he consequently needed a point of reference in the past.

In the following dissertation the elements of Kant and of Luther that are contained in Ritschl's conception of God are traced out, but as a necessary preliminary attention is concentrated first upon the views Kant and Luther themselves held.

In addition to the bibliography appended, the writer wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to Professors Benno Erdmann and Friedrich Paulsen for illuminating interpretations of Kant in their "Seminars" in 1900, and to Professors McGiffert, Knox and

others for lectures in courses at different times closely related to some matters discussed in this dissertation ; also to Professor T. C. Hall for kindly criticisms, and to Professor F. J. E. Woodbridge for helpful suggestions while it was taking final form.

CHAPTER I.

LUTHER'S CONCEPTION OF GOD.

Several lines of thought converged upon the period in which Luther lived. Many of these were intimately related to the concept of God. At the Renaissance men turned to the study of the Greek and Latin classics at first hand, while much of the philosophy of that earlier period had been handed down in connection with the doctrines of the Church. Plato conceived of God as one of the ideas in the intelligible world, the best and highest of all the ideas, the one altogether good ; Aristotle conceived of him as the "First Cause," the Entelechy of all entelechies, Pure Thought, *νόησις νοήσεως* ; among the Stoics the thought of God took a pantheistic turn. These lines of thought, particularly the Platonic, together with others less important, were fused in the system of Plotinus known as Neoplatonism. Augustine, who, for nearly a thousand years, fixed the form and largely the content of theological thought in the Western Church, was a Neoplatonist. The evidences of this are numerous and unmistakable. The writings of the Pseudo-Dionysius were also Neoplatonic, and handed down as they were through Duns Scotus Erigena and the Victorines, they helped to swell the volume of influence from the early period. The Mysticism of Thomas à Kempis, Bernhard and Bonaventura owe not a little of their inception to these works. Aristotle was scarcely known during the Christian era until a fresh study of his works in the thirteenth century served to displace in part the older Platonic and Neoplatonic influences. But not all of those influences disappeared then. At this time of awakening, also, the atomic theory of Democritus interpreted by Lucretius in his "De Natura Rerum" received attention. In fact, hardly a theory worked out by the ancient Greeks failed of being rethought. Stoicism, in addition to its being in solution in Neo-

platonism, reached this period by way of Cicero and other Latin writers, while the Hebrew thought made a fresh contribution in consequence of the renewed study of the Bible. Reuchlin [1455-1522] taught Hebrew as well as Greek and Latin, and Erasmus' Greek New Testament appeared in the year 1516.¹

All of these sources affected more or less definitely the thought of God in Luther's time. Plato's conception was in the main transcendent, while that of Plotinus was transcendent in an extreme degree. Aristotle's view was transcendent, while that of the Stoics was, as already suggested, pantheistic. Material in the Bible makes for both a transcendent and an immanent view of God. When, in the Old Testament, nature, in its peculiar manifestations, is interpreted as evidence of the immediate activity of the divine power, there is a suggestion of immanence. The same is evident in the thought of the nearness of God in Christ, and in the words of Paul, "In God we live, move and have our being." But transcendence is even more evident. The concept of God as Creator given in Genesis, the thought of his illimitable might as it appears in the fortieth chapter of Isaiah, and the conception of spirits intermediate between men and God are in line with a transcendent conception of the divine Being. These conceptions were not worked out in a precise philosophical manner by the Hebrews themselves but the metaphysics are there. "They ignored metaphysical theorizing, yet ascribed to God all metaphysical as well as moral perfections."² The metaphysical arrangement of the material came with the advent of Church theologians.

This material was worked over by the schoolmen of the Middle Ages. The doctrines of the Church with their Neoplatonism were fruitful subjects for speculation. A fresh study of the Bible was not made at that period, but its contents were not entirely neglected. Plato was studied afresh in the eleventh and twelfth centuries and Aristotle, as already suggested, in the thirteenth. The concept of God received special treatment. It was at this time that Anselm developed his ontological proof for the ex-

¹ Encyclopædia Britannica, Mark Pattison, "Erasmus."

² *Ibid.*, Flint, "Theism."

istence of God. The metaphysical attributes of God were then worked out and precisely defined as never before. "The omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience of God, and generally his metaphysical and intellectual attributes were discussed with excessive elaborateness and subtlety by the schoolmen, while his moral attributes were left in the background, or considered without sufficient earnestness or insight."¹

Luther shows familiarity with this field of thought. He was not versed in Plato and Aristotle as leading students of philosophy are to-day and yet he was acquainted with their works. When he was first called to a professorship at the University of Wittenberg it was to the chair of Philosophy. He there lectured upon the dialectics and physics of Aristotle.² As a student at Erfurt he studied "Cicero, Virgil, Livy and most of the standard Latin literature."³ He mentions John of Wesel and says that it was through the study of his works that he took his Master's degree;⁴ also Bernhard, Thomas à Kempis, and John Tauler; he mentions Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, William of Occam, and Peter Lombard; he mentions Dionysius the Areopagite,⁵ Augustine, Cicero, Plato and Aristotle, Stoics, Epicureans and Leucippus. This list is not given as indicating complete familiarity on Luther's part with all these authors, but as suggesting the range of his thought and the closeness to him which the converging lines already mentioned reached. That he was also familiar with the history of the Church and with the Bible need not be dwelt on. He did not know that history as it is known to-day, nor did he understand the Bible as scholarship since his day has presented it, but that both constituted a large part of the content of his mind cannot be questioned. And withal Luther had not a little speculative ability. Köstlin says: "The speculative talent which formed part of the native endowment of Luther, and which is displayed, for example, in the striking originality of

¹ Ency. Brit.: Flint, "Theism."

² Köstlin: "The Theology of Luther," Vol. I., p. 79.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 35.

⁴ Luther's Works, Erlang. Ed., Vol. 25, p. 325.

⁵ Luther's Works, Weimar Ed., Vol. III., p. 372.

the Christmas Sermon of A. D. 1515, with its affinity for both Mysticism and the system of Aristotle, is ever afterwards clearly discernible in his writings."¹ This must be taken into consideration in getting at his concept of God. Apart from the material handed down from the past was Luther's own mind working upon the phenomena of nature about him. Walter Bagehot says: "The first and most natural subject upon which human thought concerns itself is religion; the first wish of the half-emancipated thinker is to use his reason on the great problem of human destiny — to find out whence he came and whither he goes, to form for himself the most reasonable idea of God which he can form."² Kant says: "The cosmological proof" for the existence of God "is, as it seems to me, as old as human reason. It is so natural, so charming and widens its reflection so much with the progress of our insight, that it must continue so long as any reasonable creature exists who desires to take part in the noble effort to recognize God from his works."³ This, to be sure, was in his pre-critical period, but it well expresses what his thought was then and applies admirably to one like Luther who was in a not too critical state of mind.

After this brief survey of the material at hand in Luther's day and his own relation to it, coupled with the thought of the natural tendency of the human mind when at all speculative, Luther's conception of God may be taken up.

Luther's world view was framed in the Ptolemaic theory of the heavens. Copernicus' view was published in 1543, but "Luther mocked at it in his 'Table Talk,' and Melancthon, in his lectures on 'Physics,' says that men invent such wonderful things only from love of novelty, and to display their own ingenuity, . . . but they are evidently contradictory to the testimony of the Bible."⁴ The various points of reference in his general view were, God, the world, men and angels on the one hand, and the devil and his

¹ Köstlin: "The Theology of Luther," Vol. II., p. 203.

² Walter Bagehot: "Physics and Politics," p. 160.

³ Kant: "Beweisgrund zu einer Demonstration des Daseins Gottes," 1763. Rosenkranz, Vol. I., p. 283.

⁴ Höfding: "History of Modern Philosophy," Vol. I., p. 109.

hosts upon the other. This, of course, was the general world view in Luther's day, and in his thought of the devil the influence of popular beliefs and superstitions is very evident.¹

But to come closer to his idea of God. There were two poles to his thought, or, perhaps better, an obverse and a reverse side. Luther was out of conceit with metaphysics and metaphysicians whatever their creed or name. But he himself could not escape metaphysics. One side of his thought is distinctively such. God as pure being, majestic, "high and lifted up," to use an expression of Isaiah; God as power, as will, eternal, perfect and self-sufficient, incomprehensible, inscrutable, immutable, — such was his conception of God upon his reverse side.² Very numerous are the passages in which these aspects of the Divine Being appear. To quote briefly: "I have therefore said, a man should read and hear that in all God's works one should consider no more than his will; close eyes, ears and all senses and ask no further."³ "That the true living God must be a God whose will waves [schwebet] over all creatures, and according to whose will every thing must happen, is what the worldly-wise and the natural reason must confess."⁴ "What is a man in comparison with God? What is our might and power when compared with God's might? What is our strength and power in comparison with his power? What is all our learning and wisdom compared with his wisdom? What is all our being compared with his?"⁵ "God can not and will not be changeable."⁶ "But the cause of the divine will and command should no one seek, but with fear and trembling give honor to the Majesty on high."⁷ "God shows us through many kinds of examples that he is the Lord who casts down and raises up and according to whose decree every thing must go."⁸ "There

¹ Köstlin: "The Theology of Luther," Vol. II., p. 335.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. II., pp. 275-320.

³ Luther: Walch Ed., Vol. III., p. 700.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. XVIII., pp. 2315, 2083.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. XVIII., pp. 2476, 2079.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Vol. II., p. 267; XVIII., p. 2083.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Vol. XVIII., pp. 2117, 2126.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Vol. III., p. 885.

is no doubt that in God there are many secret hidden things which we do not know or perceive."¹ "This means that God's being, power, wisdom, goodness and whatever else a man can say about God is inexpressible, immeasurable, eternal, inconceivable. . . . Indeed in this way must a man talk about the inexpressible name of God. For he has his being from no one, has no beginning nor ending, but is from eternity in and by himself. . . . His name means simply *is*, or being, Jehovah."² In view of these and many other passages³ there can be no doubt of this aspect of Luther's thought, and it remained with him through life.⁴

In connection with this aspect may be mentioned the particular attributes of God that Luther entertained. Some have already been hinted at in the passages quoted. God was omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, eternal, unchangeable. These are the customary metaphysical attributes affixed to the Divine Being by the schoolmen and others who entertained this idea of God. Nor did Luther neglect the moral attributes. He emphasized God's holy zeal against sin, his righteousness and justice.⁵ To quote again: "Therefore from this should we come to know God's almighty force and power."⁶ "He has seen everything from eternity. . . . He is from eternity fixed and firm in his counsel; he sees and knows everything."⁷ "Since heaven is his throne, so does he extend far, far over the heavens; and since the earth is his footstool, so must he also be in the entire world. He fills everything and must be everywhere present. . . . He is bound to no place, he is excluded from none. He is in all places, also in the smallest creature, as the leaf of a tree or a blade of grass."⁸ "God is the eternal righteousness and purity, who by his very nature

¹ Luther: Walch Ed., Vol. XVIII., pp. 2067, 2301; Vol. VIII., p. 1599.

² Luther: Erlang. Ed., Vol. 32, p. 306.

³ Luther: Walch. Ed., Vol. XVIII., p. 2244; XXII., p. 52; I., p. 734; XI., p. 243.

⁴ Köstlin: "The Theology of Luther," Vol. II., pp. 295, 307.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. II., p. 284.

⁶ Luther: Walch Ed., Vol. I., p. 86, XXII., p. 113.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 735.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Vol. XXII., p. 113.

hates sin.”¹ “The Bible calls the strict righteousness of God zeal, justice or integrity.”² Other passages with similar import abound. This aspect of God with the attributes usually affixed cannot be missed in studying Luther’s works.

But all this does not touch the nerve of what was characteristic of Luther in his thinking about God. This he had in common with the men of his own day. It was their common inheritance handed down through the centuries. But the thought of God as good, as love, a loving Father, kind, forgiving, merciful, long-suffering — this is what revolutionized Luther’s own life. It is this that he prized most highly. The passages exhibiting this other, the obverse side of God — and it is here termed obverse with a purpose from Luther’s point of view, — are almost innumerable. To quote a few: “The Germans name God according to that little word ‘good’ which comes to us from earlier times, a word that indicates an eternal well-spring overflowing with pure goodness, from which all that is good and is called good flows.”³ At the beginning of his Greater Catechism he says: “What does it mean to have a God, or what is God? God is that to which a man should look expectantly for all that is good, and in whom he should take refuge in all need. Therefore to have God means nothing more nor less than to trust him and believe him with all one’s heart. As I have often said, The trust and belief of the heart makes God as well as an idol.”⁴ “What God gives is nothing but mercy, gifts, presents, pure friendship, and that comes to us out of his free goodness, favor and love, without and, indeed, contrary to our deserts.”⁵ Commenting upon the passage in Luke, “Be ye merciful, as your Father in heaven is merciful,” he says, “I must realize that I have in God a good, merciful Father.”⁶ “God is nothing else than simply pure mercifulness [Barmherzigkeit], and the man who does not see that prac-

¹ Luther: Erlang. Ed., Vol. 12, p. 172.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. 10, p. 17.

³ Luther: Walch Ed., Vol. X., p. 41.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. X., p. 36.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. III., p. 493.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Vol. XI., p. 1723.

tically says, 'There is no God.'"¹ Luther also emphasizes the thought of possession. This is evident in the passage just quoted, "What does it mean to have a God?" Other passages show it more clearly. "The Aristotelian or philosophical God is the God of the Jews, Turks and Papists. That kind of a God doesn't concern us. But the God who does have a meaning for us is the one whom the Scriptures show us as *our* God, for he gives us his presence, light and law and talks with us."² This passage has in it a value-judgment, such as Ritschl, to be noted later, makes much of. It is also in direct contradiction with another opinion that Luther expresses. "The chief article of the whole theology is that the God of the Jews and heathen is God who is rich over all [Rom. 3²⁹] even at that time when the law and circumcision were in vogue."³ But such a contradiction is nothing unusual with Luther. Logical consistency was not his forte, but his emphasis upon God as *our* God is unmistakable. Still further he says, "God hides his eternal, unspeakable goodness and mercy under anger, his righteousness under unrighteousness,"⁴ and in this way gives a helpful religious interpretation to the sterner side of God. Again, he adds, "You have a merciful God, who out of pure grace and mercy for the sake of his dear Son has pardoned and forgiven you your sins."⁵ In this passage another stage in Luther's thought is reached. Up to this point the two aspects of God as Luther conceived them stand out clearly.⁶ On the one hand is the metaphysical view of God as omnipotent power, on the other, the religious view, God as good, a loving Father mediated through his Son. This requires special treatment.

¹ Luther : Walch Ed., Vol. XI., p. 2005. ² *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 2324.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 1551.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. XVIII., p. 2119.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. VI., p. 2231.

⁶ Additional references upon the points in this paragraph :

God as love : Walch Ed., Vol. IX., p. 1261 ; XVIII., p. 2330, Erlang. Ed., Vol. 19, p. 366.

God as Father : *Ibid.*, Vol. III., p. 2164 ; X., p. 1317, Erlang. Ed., Vol. 17, p. 117.

God as good : *Ibid.*, Vol. XXII., p. 131 ; IX., p. 1053.

God as kind [barmherzig], *Ibid.*, Vol. XVIII., pp. 2120, 2230.

God as ours, *Ibid.*, Vol. IV., p. 2529.

God as gracious, *Ibid.*, Vol. XVIII., p. 2409.

This metaphysical view of God was the current one while Luther was growing up. The schoolmen, as already indicated, had worked out very precisely the various metaphysical attributes of God, while the moral ones had been neglected, the religious ones hardly touched. It was this view that occasioned the terrors Luther experienced when he entered the monastery. He looked upon God as a God of power, a stern, inexorable Judge, a Lawgiver who would countenance no infringement of the laws given. In the cloister Luther sought peace of mind by the most rigid asceticism and all the prescribed ways for becoming peaceful and pious but without avail. "He never was able, with all his self-mortification and chastity, to reach an assured conviction that God was graciously inclined toward him."¹ While giving himself to fasting and prayer without satisfactory results, Luther had his attention turned to Bernhard. "His father confessor directed him to a passage in a sermon by Bernhard, in which the latter . . . insists upon faith in such forgiveness of sins through Christ, and, in support of his position, appeals to the saying of Paul, that man is gratuitously justified through faith."² At this same time "Johann Staupitz, who had, in 1503, been elected Vicar-General of the Augustinian Order," came to exercise an influence over Luther. "Like Luther's aged friend in the monastery" [the confessor], "he represents that men are in duty bound to believe in God and his promises, and that we must not only believe that God became man, but that he did so for our good."³ Without going further into details suffice it to say that the influence of this religious man profoundly affected Luther. "The light began to break through," as he would have put it. About this same time he studied diligently the works of Gerson [died 1429] and also applied himself to Augustine. The former Luther praises in the following way: "Gerson alone, among all the teachers in the Church, has written about spiritual struggles; the others have always felt only bodily struggles."⁴ He thus indicates that in Gerson he found a

¹ Köstlin: "The Theology of Luther," Vol. I., p. 52.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 63.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. I., pp. 63, 65.

⁴ Luther: Erlang. Ed., Vol. 62, p. 121.

helpful, kindred spirit. He also praised Augustine and at different times acknowledged the debt he owed him at this turning-point in his career.¹ As the result of these inner struggles, and of the various influences thrown about him, Luther was led to a study of the Bible, particularly the works of Paul, and in consequence changed from the metaphysical to the religious conception of God. This had distinguished Augustine and Paul — Augustine derived it from Paul as he himself says in a passage which Luther refers to² — and now it became controlling in Luther's life. Perhaps the best phrasing of the attitude of mind which now dominated Luther is the thought of the "forgiving love of God in Christ," an expression that he himself frequently used. The difference between this view and the earlier one has been sufficiently explained. The new view was his most cherished thought of God, but it never completely displaced the earlier one.

But this expression "the forgiving love of God in Christ" is almost the same as the passage already quoted:³ — "You have a merciful God, who out of pure grace and mercy for the sake of his dear Son has pardoned and forgiven your sins." This suggests another problem in connection with Luther's concept of God, viz., the way he obtained knowledge of God.

Luther conceived of two spheres of knowledge and a function of the mind or soul corresponding to each. On the one hand was knowledge [ordinarily gained through the exercise of reason]; on the other hand was revelation which was appropriated through faith. As the schoolmen differentiated between faith and reason, so did Luther. Revelation, the realm of faith, was above reason, at times contrary to reason. Luther frequently spoke of reason in the highest terms, but that was when it contented itself with its own sphere. When, however, reason sought to pry into the hidden things of God or set itself up in opposition to faith, then he hurled at it all his anathemas. Reason, he maintained, was strictly limited in the range of its activities. To quote him

¹ Köstlin: "The Theology of Luther," Vol. I., p. 72.

² Luther: Walch Ed., Vol. XXII., p. 2070.

³ Page 8.

briefly: "I do not dispense with reason, for I know very well that the light of all reason has been kindled from the divine light. . . . That three and two make five is perfectly clear in the light of nature, and that a man should do good and avoid evil is equally clear in reason."¹ "The reason knows well enough how to judge in human activities and worldly affairs; it knows how to build houses and cities, it knows how to rule and to do other such things."² He goes even further than this. "The human reason and wisdom can indeed of itself go so far as to conclude, however weakly, that there must be an eternal divine Being who created all things, and preserves and rules all; for it sees such a beautifully adapted creation both in heaven and earth . . . that it must say, 'It is not possible that it should have made itself, but there must be a Creator and Lord from whom it came and by whom it is ruled.'"³ Many such passages are to be found, but when, as intimated, reason assumes airs, becomes over curious, then Luther speaks very differently. "Nature," and by nature he means practically the same as reason, "Nature knows that there is a God, who is helpful; but who that God is, that nature doesn't know at all."⁴ "If it be asserted that reason knows and leads to what is best, you may reply, yes, to what is best politically, for there reason can judge properly. . . . But how can reason determine what is good in higher and spiritual things when it is without all knowledge of God and is at variance with God's will?"⁵ This passage does not contradict the one quoted above where Luther asserts that the reason must conclude from the beauty and order of the world that there must be a God. In the former quotation he simply asserts that the reason by its natural workings will reach such a conclusion, but it will have gained no real knowledge of God. He will still remain unknown, a thought not unlike Kant's when he discusses the main arguments for God's existence. The mind naturally works in that direction, it

¹ Luther: Walch Ed., Vol. XI., p. 236.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. XI., p. 1177.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. XII., p. 830.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. III., p. 1088.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 262.

forms a concept, but existence itself still remains a problem. It may not be analyzed from the concept. Again Luther says, "All our knowledge and wisdom go no further than to matter and form,"¹ and again, "If reason were all-sufficient, then there would have been no need of the Gospel. If reason taught me that the mother of Christ was a virgin, then Gabriel might have remained in heaven and have kept silent upon the whole matter."²

But having thus limited reason, Luther magnified faith and revelation. Whatever offered itself to him as a revelation he was willing to accept. To quote him again: "I have often in times past taught and said emphatically, and now repeat that teaching that the two chief articles of the Christian teaching are faith and love, and further, I know nothing else to preach."³ "I have often said and repeat it again and again . . . that in spiritual matters and in matters of faith no one should presume to have relations with God through his thoughts. He should remain with the word."⁴ "With my reason I conclude that two and five make seven. If God should say that two and five make eight, then I would unhesitatingly accept the revelation."⁵ "The human reason makes heresy and error, faith teaches and holds the truth."⁶ "Everything that concerns faith, reason and nature despise, and to them it is wholly unsuitable."⁷ "In speaking about God's double election he says, "Since no reason can understand this, faith comes into play; a man can use faith, if such things are preached and proclaimed."⁸ "Man's reason tries to master the deep things of God but cannot. Faith is the only right attitude."⁹ These passages, which might be multiplied many times over, sufficiently indicate Luther's attitude. Rea-

¹ Luther: Walch Ed., Vol. I., p. 220.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. XII., p. 929.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. IX., p. 492.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. III., p. 2541.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. X., p. 1316.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Vol. XI., p. 224.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Vol. XI., p. 7.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Vol. XVIII., p. 2119.

⁹ *Ibid.*, Vol. XIII., p. 778.

son is a gift of God valuable in the ordinary affairs of life, but in distinctively religious matters faith is the proper guide. But faith may not know all things. The reason seeks to pry into the hidden nature of God, but its powers are not equal to the task. Faith, too, would fain know, but is more humble than her sister. Instead of wasting its efforts vainly, faith takes what is revealed and is content. Knowledge of God, then, comes not from "anxious thought" but by way of revelation.

By revelation Luther meant God's works and word. "God reveals himself in no other way than in his word and works; for a man can comprehend them in some measure. But that other, that which properly belongs to the Godhead can no man comprehend or understand."¹ Luther here, while indicating his thought about revelation, discloses another that went parallel with it. God had revealed himself, but not completely. There always remained to him a hidden side. This is why he used the attributes "incomprehensible" and "inscrutable." Luther clearly believed in this hidden side of God. It shows almost invariably when he touches upon God's majesty, will, purpose, being. He believed that God was more than he had revealed, but insisted that men should be content with the revelation. There were many dark providences and the reason was tempted to investigate. Luther counselled to make no such attempts. Abide by what is revealed. This attitude appears in many passages. "God in his substance and being is wholly unknowable and incomprehensible. We cannot properly say what he is unless we are willing to tear ourselves to pieces."² In his "De Servo Arbitrio" he says, "We must leave God in his majesty and nature, in his secret will uninvestigated."³ "God's judgments and verdicts are incomprehensible and it is for us, therefore, not to investigate but to pray with fear and trembling."⁴ "It is enough that we should know that there is a will in God that cannot be investigated. But what that will does,

¹ Luther: Walch Ed., Vol. I., p. 15.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 734.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. XVIII., p. 22.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. XVIII., p. 2301.

who, whither, and how far it goes, that is not our business to ask." ¹ "I have always held this rule, viz., to get around just as well as I could such questions as lead us to the throne of the divine majesty." ² "A man ought to be done with such questions and thoughts and hold this position, viz., that God was incomprehensible in his natural rest before the world was created." ³ More passages are not needed to show his thought. By limiting himself in this way he had simply the revelation that God had made of himself from which to obtain knowledge of God, but that he thought was amply sufficient.

This revelation was in "God's works and word" as already stated, but the word was the more important. As suggested above ⁴ Luther must have used his own mind upon the phenomena of the world about him, and this process he clearly approved, as indicated in a passage already quoted, ⁵ but he did not feel much confidence in that method. "What can a philosopher know about heaven or the world, since he doesn't know whence it comes, nor whither it goes? . . . All our knowledge and wisdom goes no further than matter and form extend. . . . Therefore, we should learn that true wisdom is in the Holy Scriptures and in the Word of God. For that teaches us not simply about the matter and form of the whole creation, but shows also an efficient and final cause, a beginning and an end of all things, who ⁶ created them and for what they were created. If we are ignorant of these two causes, our wisdom is no better than the wisdom of an irrational creature." ⁶ In many passages ⁷ Luther indicates that he regards nature as a revelation of God, but for the most part he was inclined to interpret nature in that way by reason of what he found in the Bible. There was the real revelation. But in the Bible itself he makes a distinction. He uses the term "Word" rather

¹ Luther: Walch Ed., Vol. XVIII., p. 2235.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 734.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 13.

⁴ Page 4.

⁵ Page 11.

⁶ Luther: Walch Ed., Vol. I., p. 220.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Vol. XI., p. 416; Vol. III., p. 262; III., p. 886; I., p. 15.

loosely. Sometimes it is practically synonymous with the Bible as a whole;¹ at other times it is narrowed to the term *λόγος* in John, which is, of course, identified with Christ, God's Son. That was to Luther the chief, the supreme revelation. There is where he obtained his real knowledge of God. He judged everything in accordance with what he found in Christ. This furnished him with a standard by which he judged even the Bible itself. Some passages did not seem to have Christ in them. Luther, therefore, had no hesitation about rejecting them as not being a revelation of God. But his thought of Christ as a revelation was constant. This was fundamental with him. It was this thought that came to him in the crisis of his life in the monastery at Erfurt, to which reference has been made.² It became his supreme principle in interpreting the world and God and all life. This second part of his concept of God is here styled, as above, the obverse side and such it was. It was this that was immediately before him. The reverse side he might speculate about and learn about from the Bible, but in Christ he had immediate knowledge of God as a loving Father. A few passages will indicate this clearly. "We could never attain to a knowledge of the Father's favor and grace except through the Lord Christ, who is a mirror of his fatherly heart; outside of him we see nothing but an angry and terrifying Judge."³ "He who has the Son, to him stand the Scriptures revealed, and the greater his belief in Christ, the brighter appear the Scriptures to him."⁴ "He who has the Word," and by the "Word" here, it would seem he means Christ, "has the whole Godhead."⁵ "I have often said, and say yet again, that he who would know God and without peril speculate about God, should look in the manger and there first become acquainted with Mary's Son."⁶ "Outside of his Word and Son, Christ, will

¹ Luther; Walch Ed., Vol. III., p. 2549; Vol. I., p. 220; Vol. XI., p. 1465; Vol. III., p. 2541; Vol. XII., p. 834.

² Page 10.

³ Luther: Walch Ed., Vol. X., p. 123.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. III., p. 2893.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. XI., p. 2471.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Vol. XXII., p. 201.

a man not find God.”¹ “God revealed his will through his Son and commanded him to proclaim it to the world.”² “I warn each man that he should let speculation alone. . . . Remain below beside the manger and swaddling clothes in which Christ lay, in whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. There can a man not fail of God, but find him surely. I would especially desire that this rule should be maintained after my death.”³ Other passages of like import, which abound, are not needed to develop this thought. It stands out with sufficient clearness.

A word about Luther's method is needed. He was in revolt, in part at least, against the high *a priori* method. It is true that part of his conception of God was metaphysical and that he applied attributes to God which savor of *a priori* speculation. But central for Luther in this part of his conception of God was the thought of his omnipotence,⁴ and the other attributes would naturally be associated. Still further this part was largely his inheritance from the past. He took over those attributes in the same way as he took over certain doctrines of the Church without question, as for instance, the doctrine of the Trinity. But his own particular concept of God was built up in a different way. Luther emphasized experience. As he says, “God is gracious, and merciful, and does good to those who fear him even unto the third and fourth generations. This we get from experience.”⁵ “You have learned through experience that God, though you were a stranger to him, gave you food and clothing, and that he did not regard persons, but was a Judge of the widows and orphans.”⁶ “This experience teaches us.”⁷ Closely associated with the thought of experience goes, not the *a priori*, but the *a posteriori* method. From what has appeared thus far in this discussion the latter method fits in more naturally with Luther's style of thinking, and

¹ Luther: Walch Ed., Vol. XXII., p. 52.

² *Ibid.*, Vol., XII., p. 1268.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. XXII., p. 203.

⁴ Köstlin: “The Theology of Luther,” Vol. II., pp. 281, 304.

⁵ Luther: Walch Ed., Vol. III., p. 2546.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Vol. III., p. 2164.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Vol. IX., p. 492.

it is this method that he approves as a few passages will show. In discussing Exodus 33¹⁹ where Moses was permitted to see God from behind, Luther says, "There was God's glory with thunder, lightning and a great wind and storm, and Moses saw God from behind, for his face he could not see. Therefore must we become acquainted with God in an *a posteriori* way, and remain dependent on Christ."¹ The reasoning here is somewhat peculiar, and yet it is easy to see how Luther's mind was working. Again in a passage referred to above² when he speaks of reason's concluding from the beauty and order in nature that there must be a God, he adds, "This is knowledge *a posteriori* since man considers God from without, looks upon his works and government, just as a man views a castle or house from without and there gets track of a lord or housemaster."³ This same method Luther applies to his view of "God through Christ." As already quoted,⁴ Luther maintains that men should look in the manger and see Mary's Son, if they want to know about God and then adds, "Then will a man begin to know who God is, will perceive that he is not terrifying, but most loving and to be trusted. Be on your guard against the high flying thought which suggests climbing up into heaven, without this leader, the Lord Christ in his humanity."⁵ "The Scriptures lead us to Christ, as to a man, and then to a Lord over all creatures, and then to a God. Therefore I come to them and become acquainted with God. The philosophers and worldly-wise people have wanted to lift themselves above, but they have become fools. A man must begin from below and proceed upwards."⁶ "If you wish to know God apart from Christ, and if you undertake to be reconciled without the Mediator Christ, . . . then it is not possible that you should not fall as Lucifer did and come to despair."⁷ That Luther's method, then, was in

¹ Luther : Walch Ed., Vol. XXII., p. 2111.

² Page 11.

³ Luther : Walch Ed., Vol. XII., p. 830.

⁴ Page 16.

⁵ Luther : Walch Ed., Vol. XXII., p. 201.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Vol. XI., p. 1550.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Vol. XXII., p. 53.

the main *a posteriori* and in harmony with his emphasis upon experience is clear, and that this method was particularly well adapted to his religious conception of God is equally clear. The Nominalism with which he came into contact in his study of Occam at Erfurt¹ may have been responsible for this. But whatever its source it is clearly present in Luther's thought.

If the ordinary tests be applied to Luther's concept of God² it shows itself to be, on its metaphysical side at least, in the main transcendent. There are suggestions of immanence verging upon pantheism as in the passage quoted³ in connection with the attribute of omnipresence. But this passage is from the "Tischreden" and, as Köstlin observes, caution should always be employed in the use of these talks, since Luther may not have been reported accurately.⁴ But such a thought might well have been his when under the influence of the Mystics, but this influence was a vanishing quantity with him. Ritschl maintains that after the year 1518 Mysticism had little influence over him.⁵ At any rate it is true that Luther strenuously opposed the religious fanatics of his day, and they had appropriated elements of Mysticism to a much greater extent than he had. They maintained that inspiration came to them as to the writers of the Bible. Luther in opposition insisted upon the revelation in the Bible and in consequence drew further away from Mysticism. He frequently denounced fanaticism [Schwärmerei].⁶ In his discussions of the Eucharist Luther approached pantheism in his insistence upon the ubiquity of Christ's body,⁷ but this was the result of polemics rather than of

¹ Köstlin: "The Theology of Luther," Vol. I., p. 52.

² In this survey of Luther's concept of God nothing has been said about God as Creator and Preserver of the world except as those thoughts have appeared in quotations; such conceptions were matters of course with Luther. Nor have the thoughts of God's providence, foreknowledge, predestination and other theological concepts been touched. There was no need. The purpose kept in mind has been to give the main features of Luther's thought.

³ Page 6.

⁴ Köstlin: "The Theology of Luther," Vol. II., p. 207.

⁵ Ritschl: "Justification and Reconciliation," Vol. III., Eng., p. 99.

⁶ Luther: Walch Ed., Vol. IX., p. 1036; Erlang. Ed., Vol. 31, p. 378.

⁷ Köstlin: "The Theology of Luther," Vol. II., p. 119.

cool, careful thinking. In his conception of God as Preserver, and as such in constant relations with the world, and in his thought of revelation the transcendence of God is not of the extreme type of the later English Deists, but it is in the main a transcendent view going back through Neoplatonism to Plato and Aristotle, and to the dominant conception in the Old Testament. The other, his religious conception, cannot be so easily classified, or, perhaps better, it does not need classification. It is the same God back of all who has revealed himself in a special way through Christ. The nearness of God in this aspect is suggestive of immanence, but more need hardly be said. Luther tried to guard against anthropomorphism. He says that "those who held such a view were condemned as heretics because they had attributed to the divine Majesty the form of a man,"¹ and in several passages he tries to explain away anthropomorphic elements found in the Old Testament,² but his own conception is open to the same charge if the term be taken in the broad sense of likeness to man. This is certainly apparent in his thought of God as a Person and as possessed of will, intellect, and emotions.

To summarize, then. Luther's idea of God resulted in part from the material which along several lines came to him as his inheritance from the past, and in part from his own peculiar religious experience. There were two sides or faces to it, an obverse and a reverse. The latter was metaphysical with the thought of God as omnipotent power central in it. But this Being could be known only in so far as he had revealed himself. It was a transcendent conception, in many respects anthropomorphic, with at times suggestions of immanence. The obverse side was distinctively religious, but it, too, reached back into the past through Augustine to Paul. Luther's own religious experience led him to appreciate and to appropriate it. In accordance with this, God was viewed as a kind, loving Father, as pure graciousness, and knowledge of him was gained only through the revelation of him-

¹ Luther: Walch Ed., Vol. I., p. 735.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 736; III., p. 208.

self made through his word, particularly Christ. This to Luther was the conception of God *par excellence*.¹

¹ A word needs to be said about the use of Luther's own works in getting at this concept. Köstlin maintains ["The Theology of Luther," Vol. II., p. 207] that one may draw from most of his works, even from his sermons, if one feels that at that point Luther was trying to explain precisely. In some sermons he might express himself loosely on a doctrinal point when some particularly practical matter was his special aim. The "Tischreden," as already explained, needs to be used with care, but even in those talks Luther gave very important material at times. In the main outlines of his conception of God one could not easily go astray, because his central thought appears so frequently. Still further Luther himself said in a letter in 1537: "I do not know any book of mine that is right, unless, perhaps, 'De Servo Arbitrio' and the 'Catechism.'" [Köstlin: "The Theology of Luther," Vol. II., p. 301.] In developing Luther's concept of God the writer has been guided a great deal by these works and then has filled in as occasion required from his other works.

CHAPTER II.

KANT'S CONCEPTION OF GOD.

The atmosphere Kant breathed was different in many respects from that which surrounded Luther. The Renaissance movement, the influences of which Luther felt in part, had developed and merged itself into the period of modern thought. The lines that converged upon Luther's period were no less apparent in Kant's time, but with an advance. In addition to a larger knowledge of the history of the Church, and a completer understanding of Plato and of Aristotle and the interweaving of that material by the schoolmen, the period in which Kant lived had the newer thought of Descartes, Spinoza, Rousseau, Leibnitz and Wolff, together with the different but none the less important thought of Bacon, Hobbes, Locke, Berkeley, Hume and Newton. Still further, the Protestant movement which owed its immediate inception to Luther and which naturally at that time was experiencing its birth-throes had permanently established itself. It had, too, passed through a period of scholasticism and experienced within its own circles a new reformation under the name of Pietism. There had also throughout Europe become quite pronounced a feeling for independent nationality in opposition to the Church imperialism of the Middle Ages. With all this Kant was not so familiar as are the best students of history and philosophy to-day, but these lines cross and recross within his works. He is differentiated from Luther, also, in that while Luther rejected the Copernican theory of the heavens,¹ Kant fully accepted it and in his own work upon the "Geography of the Heavens" added to it by his outlined Nebular Hypothesis. Not without its significance is this different atmosphere and this different point of view in a consideration of Kant's conception of God.

¹ Chapter I., p. 4.

In his pre-critical period Kant was not infrequently concerned with the concept of God and proofs for his existence. He speaks of God in a very natural way in his earliest work¹ and touches somewhat critically Leibnitz' view. "It is really possible that God has created many million worlds, understood in a truly metaphysical sense ; still it remains undetermined whether they actually exist or not."² "Our metaphysics is, like many other sciences in fact, only on the threshold of a real fundamental knowledge ; God knows if we shall ever see them step over it."³ "Leibnitz believed that it didn't suit the power and wisdom of God that He should be compelled to renew without ceasing the motion that He had imparted to His works,—a view which Newton entertained,—and this drove him on to seek a law by which he could avoid this difficulty."⁴ "I take my stand here. The very first movements in this world-building [Weltgebäude] were not brought forth through the power of a moved matter ; for then would they not have been first. They were also not caused by the immediate power of God, or any intelligence, so long as it is still possible that they could have arisen through the effect of a matter at rest ; for God spares Himself so much activity as He can without harm to the world-machine, and therefore He makes nature so active and effective as possible."⁵ "But Leibnitz saw himself compelled to call the wisdom of God to his help, a sure mark that geometry had furnished him no sufficiently powerful weapon."⁶ In his dissertation of 1755⁷ Kant again indicates how his thought is related to the problem of God. Instead, however, of trying to deduce the existence of God from the concept of the most perfect Being he makes such a Being the starting-point of his thought. After considering the principle of contradiction, he turns to that of sufficient reason and says, "There is a Being whose existence

¹ "Schätzung der Lebendigen Kräfte," April 22, 1747.

² Works, Rosenkranz and Schubert, Vol. V., p. 24.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. V., p. 35.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. V., p. 72.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. V., p. 76.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Vol. X., p. 135.

⁷ "Principiorum primorum cognitionis metaphysicæ nova dilucidatio."

precedes the very possibility of himself and of all things, and is said to exist by absolute necessity. He is called God."¹ "There is given, therefore, one God, the absolutely necessary principle of every possibility."² "Descartes, we know, has given an argument for the existence of God drawn from the very notion that was in him. God is of all beings the one in whom existence is earlier than, or if you please, identical with possibility."³ The imperishability of matter he defends and then adds, "What has thus far been said concerning the unchangeable quantity of absolute reality in the universe, ought to be understood in this sense, viz., so far as all things happen according to the order of nature. But," he proceeds, "who is there who has dared to doubt, that through the power of God and intelligence of heaven, the perfect material of the world, if becoming exhausted, could be renewed more purely than it is permitted through nature, and light could be added and all things brought to the point of highest perfection."⁴ Again he says: "Since, therefore, the existence of substances simply with respect to mutual intercourse and determination is evidently insufficient, and to that degree argues from an external connection to a common cause of all, in which respectively should be formed their existence, and not without this common principle can a universal nexus be conceived, consequently from that is gained the most evident witness of the highest cause of all things, *i. e.*, God, and indeed one [God], which [witness] indeed by my thought seems far to surpass that demonstration of contingency."⁵ In his later works but still pre-critical Kant frequently mentions God as "the Highest Reality,"⁶ as "Creator of the world,"⁷ as "moral,"⁸ and says that "necessity" is an "immediate work of God,"⁹ and in 1763¹⁰

¹ Kant : Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. I., p. 14.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 15.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 15.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 33.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 42.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 49.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Vol. VII., p. 38.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Vol. VII., p. 61.

⁹ *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 57.

¹⁰ "Der einzig mögliche Beweisgrund."

he makes a determined effort to work out a demonstration of the existence of God. In this treatise he maintains that the ontological proof is the only real proof but says that the cosmological is older and fits more easily the common thought.¹ He concludes by saying: "It is altogether necessary that a man should convince himself of the existence of God; it is not, however, just so necessary that a man should demonstrate it."²

From these citations it is quite evident that in his pre-critical period Kant was busy with the concept of God. At times he used the term in a very natural ejaculatory way, while at other times he seemed to conceive him as the necessary presupposition of all that exists. At any rate the concept of God was very real to him, a factor with which he must reckon. But whatever his thought at this period, it may not too readily be relied upon as indicative of Kant's real attitude. Only what passed through his critical period may be so regarded. To that attention must next be directed.³

Kant's critical period began with his Inaugural Dissertation in 1770. Intimations of his new thought and method are traceable in the preceding four or five years, but this dissertation constituted his first public utterance with changed point of view. In this work, as Paulsen points out, "Platonism broke through into Kant's thought."⁴ There is with him, as with Plato, a grouping of the totality of thought and experience into two worlds, the sensible and the intelligible. Throughout his later thinking this distinction remained constant. To the sense-world [Sinnenwelt] belonged the things of sense, and to the intelligible-world [Intelligibele Welt] belonged the things of the intellect. "The sense element," he says in 1770, "is the receptivity of the sub-

¹ Kant: Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. I., p. 284.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 286.

³ This whole matter of the continuity of Kant's thought about God has been thoroughly treated by Kumetaro Sasao in his "Prolegomena zur Bestimmung des Gottesbegriffes bei Kant," Halle, 1900. With him the writer of this dissertation is in the main in agreement. It is not purposed to enter into the same discussion here, but rather to indicate Kant's main positions.

⁴ Paulsen: Immanuel Kant, p. 92.

ject; the intellectual, rational element is the power that the subject has to represent to itself what cannot through its own qualities come into its sense."¹ "The principle of the form of the universe is that which contains the reason of the universal nexus, by which all substances and their states pertain to the same whole which is called the world. The principle of the form of the sensible world is that which contains the reason of the universal nexus of all things so far as they are phenomena. The form of the intelligible world recognizes an objective principle, that is, some cause through which there is a collection of existing things into themselves."² It may also be added that the objects of this intelligible world are noumena as those of the sensible world are phenomena. This thought remains permanently in the background of all Kant's later works and not infrequently comes to clear expression.³ One of the best passages to see this is in his "Critique of the Practical Reason," when he speaks of the two things which had moved him most profoundly, viz., "the starry heavens above him and the moral law within." "I see them before me" he says, "and join them immediately with the consciousness of my own existence. The first begins from that place which I occupy in the external sense world, and extends the combination in which I stand to an unbounded greatness of worlds upon worlds and systems upon systems, and further still to boundless times of their periodical movement, beginning and continuance. The second begins from my unseen self, my personality, and places me in a world which is truly infinite, but traceable only in the understanding and with which I know myself not as there in mere accidental, but universal and necessary union."⁴ But passages need not be multiplied. One cannot read much of Kant in his critical period without appreciating this setting for his thought. It is, indeed, only as one starts from this that one can grasp his

¹ Kant : Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. I., p. 309.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 316.

³ Kant : K. R. V. : B. Erdmann, p. 242 ; Rosenkranz, VIII., p. 156 ; "Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten," Rosenkranz, VIII., p. 84 ; "Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft." *Ibid.*, X., p. 181.

⁴ Kant : Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. VIII., p. 312.

thought. It is especially important in considering his conception of God.

This view, however, is not peculiar to Kant or to Plato. The naïve consciousness makes a similar distinction. It divides the total realm of experience, real or possible, into the world that is seen and into the world that is not seen. The origin of such a thought need not be touched here. It lies back in the early consciousness of the race; indeed, it may be necessary for the mind to make such a division, since whatever is, suggests its opposite, as Being suggested not-Being to the early Greek thinkers. But the naïve consciousness goes a step further even as Plato did. It stoutly maintains the reality of objects, beings, etc., in the unseen world as well as in the seen world. To have grasped a thought clearly, is one with asserting that reality corresponds with the thought. For Plato indeed the world of appearances was not the real world at all. The intelligible world, the world of ideas was the real. The sensible world was made up of copies, shadows of the real. Now it is right here that Kant differentiated himself. His "Erkenntnisstheorie" constituted a criticism of the naïve view as well as of the Platonic in part.

"All our knowledge," he says, "begins with experience. Of that there can be no doubt."¹ But what elements are there in that experience? Kant's thought becomes clear if a man's mind be viewed as having three stories, the lowest, sensibility [Sinnlichkeit], the next higher, understanding [Verstand], and the highest, reason [Vernunft].² The first he speaks of in this way: "The capacity [or ability] to receive ideas through the way we are affected by objects is sense-perception, sensibility."³ The point emphasized here is the being affected, the receptivity. "Through the understanding, however," he continues, "the intuitions [Anschauungen] are thought, and from it [the Verstand] come the concepts [Begriffe]"⁴ Elsewhere Kant speaks of the

¹ Kant: K. R. V. : B. Erdmann, p. 41.

² *Ibid.*, p. 272. A good exposition of these is given by Paulsen; Immanuel Kant, p. 153.

³ Kant: K. R. V. : B. Erdmann, p. 65.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

form and content of our knowledge. The sensuous side gives the content, the understanding gives the form. No knowledge without the form given by the mind, no content without what the sense furnishes.¹ But thus far nothing has been done with the reason [Vernunft]. "This never relates itself to an object, but simply to the understanding."² "The understanding constitutes an object for the reason [Vernunft] just as the receptive side of a man's self constitutes an object for the understanding."³ "To make a systematic unity of all possible empirical activities of the understanding is the business of the reason."⁴ "It is the power of principles."⁵ "It is regulative, not constitutive."⁶ From these and many other passages it is clear that Kant thought that the reason [Vernunft] simply takes what the understanding [Verstand] furnishes and works that over according to its own laws and purposes.

In view of this outline of the way Kant conceived the human mind to function his conception of the "Ding-an-sich" becomes intelligible. He seems to have in mind two sets of Dinge-an-sich or Noumena. The phenomena which are the objects fashioned by the mind out of the combination of intuitions [Anschauungen] and ideas [Vorstellungen] imply a somewhat lying back of them, a somewhat which affects the sensibility and causes it to function.⁷ Men never get at that somewhat as a matter of knowledge. They are confined to phenomena [Erscheinungen], but the mind thinks that somewhat which may thus be termed Noumenon or Ding-an-sich.⁸ This is an implication, a necessity of thought which the understanding [Verstand] discovers. But when Kant turns to

¹One of Kant's best summaries of this whole matter is to be found in his "Progress of Metaphysics in Germany since the time of Leibnitz and Wolff," 1791. Rosenkranz, Vol. I., p. 568.

²Kant : K. R. V. : B. Erdmann, p. 487.

³*Ibid.*, p. 499.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 499.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 347.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 441.

⁷Kant : Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. III., p. 45.

⁸*Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 436 ; III., p. 79 : K. R. V. : B. Erdmann, pp. 245, 247.

a consideration of the reason [Vernunft] he finds another set of Noumena. Here he has much the same machinery as in the case of the understanding. The categories are ways of predicating, judging, or ways in which the Verstand functions. But the reason [Vernunft] also functions, not in four ways as does the understanding but in three. The functionings may be termed Vernunftbegriffe,¹ ideas, concepts of the reason, as those of the Verstand are called Verstandesbegriffe, concepts of the understanding or categories. Now these three ways of functioning are directed toward bringing all transcendental ideas into three classes, viz., "the absolute unity of the thinking subject, the absolute unity of the conditions of phenomena, and the absolute unity of the condition of all objects of thought in general,"² or in other words, the soul, the world, and God. The process here is similar to that which obtains in deriving Erkenntniss from sensibility and understanding. The understanding furnishes the form, the sensibility furnishes the content and the two result in knowledge, but there is implied all the time a reality which is the cause of all sense excitations. Here in this other sphere the reason furnishes its ways of functioning, new categories, if you please, and the Verstand furnishes its judgments and the combination is the three ideas of the soul, the world, and God, but there is implied here as in the other case a somewhat, a reality corresponding to each of those ideas. Here is another set of Noumena, objects of thought belonging not to the sense world but to the intelligible world.³

It thus appears that Kant in his critical period viewed God as a Noumenon. The question arises then, could there, in that case, be any knowledge [Erkenntniss] of him? The answer has already been hinted at. A few considerations will make the matter clear. In his "Prolegomena to Metaphysics" [1783] he says, "I confess freely that recollection of David Hume was just that which many years ago first disturbed my dogmatic slumber, and gave to my

¹ Kant: K. R. V.: B. Erdmann, pp. 272-274.

² *Ibid.*, p. 292.

³ This brief exposition of Kant's thought of the Vernunft and its workings is made up from many passages. Some of them are: K. R. V.: B. Erdmann, pp. 273, 274, 292, 294, 430. Rosenkranz, VIII., pp. 93-94; I., pp. 427, 429.

investigations in the field of speculative philosophy a wholly different turn.”¹ The question Kant then set himself to answer was, “How is metaphysics possible?” This subject he regarded as outside the field of immediate experience. Metaphysics had been simply analytical. But by analytical judgments one does not increase one’s field of knowledge. Only synthetic judgments do this. These men are making all the time, but how far do they go? Only to the bounds of experience. If there is to be any enlargement of knowledge beyond that, then it must come not in an *a posteriori*, but in an *a priori* way. This, then, became Kant’s second quest. “Are there any synthetic judgments *a priori*?” He answered in the affirmative. In mathematics there are judgments the predicates of which increase the connotation of the subject, and yet they are not taken from experience. They are, therefore, synthetic, and not *a posteriori*, but *a priori*. This he also maintained was true of all natural sciences. The predicates added by the mind called categories increase the meaning of the subjects. This increase comes not from experience but from the mind. This gives to the propositions a necessary and universal element not gained in any degree from experience. Consequently in those two fields Kant felt himself justified in maintaining the reality of synthetic judgments *a priori*. But how about metaphysics? There, too, Kant found judgments that were synthetic and *a priori*, but there was no recourse to experience for a content. Metaphysics could not, therefore, be put upon the same basis with mathematics and the natural sciences. In them there was both form and content, but in metaphysics only form. As he says in his “Prolegomena to Metaphysics,” “Metaphysics, as natural disposition of the reason [Vernunft] is actual, but it is also for itself only dialectical and deceptive,”² and again in the same work he declares: “I can not bring out of the concept of a thing through my own power of thought the concept of something else whose existence is necessarily joined with the first, but I must bring experience to my aid, and, although my understanding *a*

¹ Kant: Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. III., p. 9.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. III., p. 142.

priori [still always only in relation to possible experience] gives me the concept of some such union [as of causality], still I can not set it forth as the concepts of mathematics *a priori* in the representation and explain its possibility *a priori*, but I always need this concept, together with the underlying propositions of its application, if it is to be worthful *a priori* — as it is still desired in metaphysics.”¹ This last clause is suggestive. “Still desired,” but, he implies, not yet attained, even though his “Critique of the Pure Reason” had already made its public appearance.

From these passages and this line of thought, which, it is maintained, is true to Kant, one can see what he would say in answer to the question, “Do men get knowledge [Erkenntniss] of God?” They do not get Erkenntniss of him. Erkenntniss comes from experience or possible experience. The reason [Vernunft] never comes into contact with experience which is the combination of sensibility and understanding. The reason, as already pointed out, simply takes what material the understanding furnishes, adds categories of its own, Soul, World, and God, but the result, while formed in much the same way as Erkenntniss of science, is different in that there is no content of experience to place in the bare forms of thought thus constructed. The relation to God as Noumenon is, therefore, one of faith. “No one can boast,” he says, “that he *knows* that there is a God and a future life; for if he knows that, then he is just the man whom I have sought for a long time. All knowing [if it has to do with the object of the pure reason] can be communicated; and I would therefore be able to hope through his teaching to have my own knowing extended in so wonderful a measure. But, no, the conviction is not logical, but moral certainty; and since this rests upon subjective grounds [the moral consciousness, or disposition, “*Gesinnung*”], so must I never say, it is morally certain that a God exists, etc., but *I am* morally certain. This means that the belief in God and in another world is so interwoven with my moral consciousness, that so little danger do I run of losing the latter, just so little am I concerned that the former will ever be taken away from me.”²

¹ Kant : Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. III., p. 149.

² Kant : K. R. V. : B. Erdmann, p. 593.

Here, then, a different line of thought about God which Kant entertained comes into view. This, too, must be traced briefly.

This second aspect of his conception of God, Kant touches frequently in his "Critique of Pure Reason,"¹ but it comes to clearest expression in his other two Critiques and in his "Religion within the Limits of Mere Reason." He passes from the field of theoretical knowledge to the field of what is practical; in a word, to the sphere of morality. In his first Critique he indicates the three fundamental questions he had sought to answer — the three that summed up in themselves all the interests of his reason, viz.: "What can I know? What ought I to do? What may I hope?"² At this point in the discussion one is right on the watershed between Kant's answer to the first of these questions and his answer to the last two.

In his "Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten," Kant maintains that the only thing always and everywhere good is the good will. This he conceives of as the readiness on the part of the individual to conform his acts to the demands of the moral law. The highest good for men consists of two parts, morality and happiness. "The moral law," he says, "leads to the practical task, which, without any assistance from sense impulses, is prescribed by the pure reason, namely, the necessary completion of the first and chief part of the highest good, morality, and since this can be accomplished completely only in an eternity, to the postulate of immortality. Just this law must also lead to the possibility of the second element of the highest good, namely, a happiness [Glückseligkeit] proportioned to that morality [Sittlichkeit], just so disinterestedly as in the former case out of mere impartial reason — that is, lead to the presupposition of the existence of a cause adequate to this effect; that is, must lead to postulating the existence of God as necessarily belonging to the possibility of the highest good [which object of our will is necessarily bound up with the moral legislation of the pure reason]. This relation we will convincingly set forth."³ In many places he indicates the rigid

¹ Kant : K. R. V. : B. Erdmann, pp. 581-594.

² *Ibid.*, p. 579.

³ Kant : K. P. R. : Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. VIII., p. 264.

character of the demands of the moral law, but perfect obedience to those demands he clearly recognizes is extremely difficult. Consequently he feels himself justified in assuming the existence of God as a helper. "Properly the concept of God springs only out of the consciousness of this law and the need of the reason to assume a power which can produce this result which is possible in the world and agrees with the moral purpose of the world."¹ "The idea of a highest good in the world," he again says, "for the possibility of which we must assume a higher, moral, most holy and all-powerful Being."² "Because man cannot of himself realize the idea of the highest good which is inseparably bound up with the pure moral consciousness [not simply on the side of the happiness that is connected with it, but also the necessary union of man with the whole-world purpose], . . . therefore does he find himself led to a belief in the coöperation or management of a moral world Ruler, through whom alone this end is possible."³ To quote him again briefly: "Natural religion as morality [in relation to the freedom of the subject], linked with the concept of that which can procure the result for its final purpose [the concept of God as the moral world author], and related to the continuance of man, which is proportioned to this whole purpose [immortality], is a pure practical concept of reason [Vernunftbegriff], which, notwithstanding its infinite fruitfulness, still presupposes only so little power of theoretical reason as that one can practically convince each man of it sufficiently, and at least the effect of it each man can demand as duty."⁴

In these passages Kant's line of reasoning is similar to that which he used in his first Critique. In that he was seeking the fundamental conditions of knowledge. He recognized that mathematics existed, and that the natural sciences existed. His question was, not, is there knowledge, but, granted that there is knowledge, what are the conditions that make that knowledge possible.

¹ Kant: "Religion innerhalb," Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. X., p. 123.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. X., p. 5.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. X., p. 167.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. X., p. 188.

Here he recognizes the moral law as a fact within himself as he indicates at the end of his "Critique of Practical Reason" in the passage already quoted¹ about the "starry heavens above and the moral law within." He also felt that the demands of that law must be fulfilled. The question with him was, Upon what theory can that desired end be achieved? Upon the theory of freedom, immortality, and the existence of God, was his answer. These are the postulates of the moral law²—they underlie and make possible the fulfilment of that law.

But it must be noted here that Kant does not regard this relation to the moral law and the assumption of God, freedom, and immortality as *Erkenntniss* in the sense he used that term in his first Critique. It is true that he used the term "*Erkenntniss*" in several ways in that work, but, as already indicated,³ his real thought seems to be that "*Erkenntniss*," properly so-called, results from a combination of intuitions and ideas [*Vorstellungen*], which together make phenomena [*Erscheinungen*], arranged according to the functioning nature of the understanding, viz., the categories.⁴ He speaks of "*Erkenntniss a priori*" and "practical *Erkenntniss*"⁵ but when his whole thought is examined one can hardly escape the conviction that true *Erkenntniss* is confined to the sphere of the phenomena, to the sense world. Indeed, he is frequently careful to guard against any misunderstanding, though he was not always successful in this. In his "Critique of the Practical Reason" he carefully differentiates between the pure theoretical and the pure practical reason. The analytic of the pure theoretical reason had to do with the knowledge [*Erkenntniss*] of objects. . . . The practical reason has to do not with objects so as to know them [*Erkennen*], but with their proper power so as to make them actual, *i. e.*, it has to do with a will."⁶ Again in the same work

¹ Page 25.

² Kant: K. P. V.: Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. VIII., pp. 246-274.

³ Pages 26 and 27.

⁴ Passages indicating his thought of *Erkenntniss* are as follows: K. R. V.: B. Erdmann, pp. 131, 139, 140, 141, 162, 134, 164, 284.

⁵ Kant: K. R. V.: B. Erdmann, p. 481.

⁶ Kant: K. P. V.: Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. VIII., p. 218.

he says: "Does our knowledge [Erkenntniss] become actually extended through pure practical reason, and is that which for the speculative reason was transcendent, in the practical reason immanent? Of course, but only in a practical way. For we know [Erkennen] indeed in this way *neither* the nature of our soul, nor the intelligible world, nor the highest Being, according to that which they in themselves are, but have only joined the concepts of them in the practical concept of the highest good, as the object of our will, and completely *a priori*, through pure reason, but by means of the moral law, and also simply in relation to that in consideration of the object which it [the law] commands."¹ "Therefore there was no extension of knowledge [Erkenntniss] of given supersensuous objects, but simply an extension of theoretical reason and of knowledge of the same in consideration of what is in general supersensuous so far as it was necessary to admit that such objects might exist, without more nearly determining them."² He makes a similar qualification in his "Religion within the Limits of Mere Reason." "This idea of a moral Ruler of the world is a task for our practical reason. It isn't a matter for us to *know* what God in himself [his nature] is, but what he is for us as moral beings."³ But without presenting more passages, enough, it would seem, has been advanced to indicate that Kant did not include God within the sphere of theoretical knowledge.

In the matter of attributes which Kant conceived of as attaching to God, it should be noticed that he warns against anthropomorphism, though he also admits that it is almost unavoidable. "By means of our reason," he says, "we cannot conceive how an all-sufficient Being could sacrifice something of that which belonged to his blessedness, how he could deprive himself of a possession. That is the schematism of analogy, which we cannot avoid. But to transform this into a schematism of object-determination [for the extension of our knowledge, 'Erkenntniss'], is anthropomorphism, which in a moral view, [as in religion] has the most

¹ Kant: K. P. V.: Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. VIII., p. 276.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII., p. 278.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. X., p. 167. Cf. *Ibid.*, Vol. X., p. 170, and K. d. U.: Vol. IV., pp. 359, 373, 381, 383.

harmful consequences.”¹ But though he recognized the evil of anthropomorphism, his own conception of God takes on that character with the attributes he predicates of him, if the term be taken in a broad sense, that is, of likeness to men.

Kant attributes to God will,² and understanding,³ and reason,⁴ and predicates of him the usual metaphysical attributes, as omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, eternity, justice and goodness.⁵ He characterizes him as the “Author of the world,”⁶ “Creator”⁷ and “Ruler of the world”⁸; the “Giver of laws,”⁹ “Sustainer and Judge,”¹⁰ “Father,”¹¹ “Love,”¹² “unitary, yet with a threefoldness which is due, perhaps, to the nature of men’s minds,”¹³ “transcendent,”¹⁴ “Providence,”¹⁵ thoroughly moral.¹⁶ It is not necessary to go into these in detail, but they are very evidently attached to his thought of God. Especially important, however, is his thought of God as moral. Previously the emphasis had been laid upon the metaphysical attributes as already pointed out,¹⁷ but with Kant the emphasis was laid on what was moral in God. As he says, “The concept of God belongs originally not to physics, *i. e.*, to the speculative reason, but to the moral

¹ Kant: “Religion innerhalb,” Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. X., p. 75. Note. Cf. *Ibid.*, Vol. X., p. 169, 203, 221; K. R. V.: B. Erdmann, p. 518.

² K. R. V.: B. Erdmann, p. 518, 585; Rosenkranz, Vol. I., p. 635; VIII., p. 265; X., p. 213.

³ Same as 2 and elsewhere.

⁴ K. R. V.: B. Erdmann, p. 585.

⁵ Kant: K. d. U. Rosenkranz, Vol. IV., p. 345; K. R. V.: B. Erdmann, p. 452.

⁶ Kant: Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. X., p. 145, note; p. 189.

⁷ *Ibid.*, X., pp. 101, 168.

⁸ *Ibid.*, X., pp. 117, 146.

⁹ *Ibid.*, X., p. 123.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, X., p. 168.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, X., p. 175.

¹² *Ibid.*, X., p. 175.

¹³ *Ibid.*, X., p. 176.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, X., p. 231; K. R. V.: B. Erdmann, p. 483.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, VII., pp. 130, 134, 224, 258, 282.

¹⁶ He frequently brings out the thought of God as moral, most frequently by the use of that adjective before an attribute, as “moral Urheber,” “moral Ruler.” Cf. Rosenkranz, Vol. VIII., pp. 208, 283, 285, 308, 375; IV., pp. 347, 352, 355.

¹⁷ Chapter I., p. 3.

sphere,"¹ and points out that he could hardly deduce the moral attributes of God from the metaphysical, but does feel himself justified in attaching the metaphysical attributes on the basis of his moral attributes.²

To summarize briefly, for in the main Kant's conception of God has been outlined. In his earlier thinking and writing Kant mentions God in a perfectly natural way, and at the same time shows familiarity with Leibnitz' view. In 1755 he maintained that God must be given as the very possibility of thought, and conceived of him as the ground of reciprocal action in the world-all. This view continued throughout his critical period,³ but it was no longer a matter of *a priori* knowledge but of pure assumption. In this period his chief problem was epistemological. He conceived of a sense world and of an intelligible world and to the former belonged phenomena, to the latter noumena. Real Erkenntniss, however, he confined to the phenomenal world, but for practical purposes he felt justified in assuming God, freedom, and immortality as the necessary postulates for the fulfilment of the moral law which he felt as a fact in his own consciousness. He did, indeed, attach metaphysical attributes to God but his emphasis was on the moral attributes.⁴

In attempting to classify Kant's conception of God, such categories as pantheistic, deistic, immanent or transcendent, personal or impersonal, theistic or monotheistic need to be applied. Kant's own use of terms will at times be the guide.

Kant uses the term "immanent" in the sense of what is within the bounds of possible experience, and "transcendent" in the sense of what is beyond such experience. "Principles," he says, "the application of which is wholly within the bounds of possible experience, we will call 'immanente,' and those that fly beyond those bounds, 'transscendente.'"⁴ He also at times uses the terms "empirical" and "immanent" synonymously.⁵ In refer-

¹ Kant: Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. VIII., p. 285.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII., pp. 284, 285.

³ Sasao: Prolegomena, p. 11.

⁴ Kant: K. R. V.: B. Erdmann, p. 271.

⁵ Kant: Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. III., p. 131.

ring to God, freedom, and immortality, he says, "These three theses always remain for the speculative reason transcendent, and have no immanent, that is, for the objects of experience, permissible, and so for us, advantageous use."¹ This taken in connection with what has already been said about God as a Noumenon or Ding-an-sich, would seem to be conclusive. His conception of God would thus be transcendent. But there are passages that seem to suggest a universal reason in the world, and one passage at least which is suggestive of an identity between God and nature. This passage is in his first Critique and runs as follows: "May I consider purpose-like orderings as purposes, since I derive them from a divine will, although by means of particular capacities placed in the world? Yes, that you can do, but so that it must be much the same whether anyone says, divine wisdom has ordered everything according to its highest purpose, or the idea of the highest wisdom is a regulation in the investigation of nature, and a principle in the systematic and purposeful unity of the same according to universal laws of nature, even indeed where we do not perceive them; that is, it must be there, where you perceive them, wholly the same to say, *God has wisely so willed, or nature has, therefore, wisely ordered it.*"² Such a passage as this way have given rise to the charge of Spinozism which was made against Kant. That charge, however, Kant himself repelled in his article "Was heisst; sich im Denken Orientiren" in 1786. Here in a note he says, "It is difficult to conceive, how thoughtful learned men can find in the Critique of Pure Reason aid to Spinozism. The Critique completely clips the wings of dogmatism so far as the knowledge [Erkenntniss] of supersensuous objects is concerned, and right there Spinozism is so dogmatic, that it vies with the mathematicians in the matter of strength of proof. . . . Spinozism leads directly to fanaticism [Schwärmerei]. On the other hand, there is no surer single way to root out all fanaticism than by setting bounds to the powers of the reason"³ which

¹ Kant: K. R. V.: B. Erdmann, p. 576.

² *Ibid.*, p. 517.

³ Kant: Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. I., p. 386.

was just what Kant's first Critique aimed to do. Here Kant doesn't refer directly to the thought of God as pantheistic or otherwise, but he does indicate clearly his attitude to Spinozism, and consequently the conclusion may be drawn that he would have repelled in like manner the thought that his system was pantheistic like Spinoza's. In another passage he clearly shows opposition to pantheism and Spinozism. "It comes about," he says, "that those who seek a highest ground for the possibility of the objectively purposeful form of matter without attributing to it an understanding [Verstand], still gladly reduce the world to a single all-embracing substance [Pantheism], or [what is only a more determined explanation of the former] to a sum of many determinations inhering in a simple substance [which is Spinozism], simply to receive therefrom that condition of all purposefulness, the unity of the ground."¹ But in spite of this denial there are suggestions of immanence in Kant's thought, especially in his dealing with the practical reason as he himself admits in a passage already given in this chapter.² But before concluding definitely, other matters must be considered.

The Deistic controversy had gone on in England during the latter part of the seventeenth and the earlier half of the eighteenth centuries. Between the Deists and the Theists the real difference consisted in whether divine revelation were admitted or not. Both parties were almost equally rationalistic. The difference between natural religion and Christianity was held to consist in the greater clearness and certainty of moral duties, rewards and punishments, and certain special observances as baptism and the Lord's Supper, which were to be found in Christianity. This greater clearness and certainty came to Christianity through revelation. The thought of God that obtained in both camps was fundamentally transcendent. The Deists looked upon God as the Creator of the world, but his work was so perfect that he didn't need to interfere with its running. The Theists, on the other hand, maintained that God did interfere by way of revelation and miracles.

¹ Kant: K. d. U.: Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. IV., p. 315.

² Page 34.

Kant was familiar with the thought in England at this earlier period. He was acquainted with the works of Hutcheson, Shaftesbury, Locke, Hume, Tillotson and Clarke. These and other English writers closely identified with the whole Deistic controversy exercised a profound influence upon German thought in the first half of the eighteenth century. The environment which they created for Kant himself will be treated in the following chapter. Just those two features which distinguished between Deists and Theists Kant deals with in his "Religion within the Limits of Mere Reason." It is these that need treatment right here.

Kant does not expressly reject revelation, but he whittles it to so fine a point that it all but vanishes. He expresses himself as follows: "Revelation can at least conceive of a religion of pure reason within its own bounds."¹ "If we assume statutory laws of a religion, and place religion in our obedience to them, then is our knowledge of them [the laws] possible, not through our own pure reason, but only through revelation, which, . . . in that case would be a *historical*, not a pure faith based on reason."² "To the people no teaching seems to be fitted to be an unchangeable norm, which is based upon pure reason, consequently there is a demand for a divine revelation, therefore also for a historical authentication of its worth through the deduction of its origin."³ "Nobody can deny to a Scripture, which according to its practical contents contains what is purely divine, the possibility of its being considered actually a divine revelation [especially in view of that which is historical in it]."⁴ "Hardly will any one expect a new revelation through new wonders."⁵ "In the case of the three mysteries, Creation, Satisfaction, and Election, God has given us no revelation, nor could he, for we couldn't understand them."⁶ "Revelation comes through men, and is ex-

¹ Kant: "Religion innerhalb," Rosenkranz, Vol. X., p. 13.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. X., p. 123.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. X., p. 133.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. X., p. 158.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. X., p. 159.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Vol. X., p. 173.

plained by them, consequently it is at least possible that an error might prevail there.”¹ It is evident from these passages that Kant admits the possibility of revelation, and yet one gets the impression that revelation was not vital to him. He is accommodating, so far as possible, his stronger critical thought to the needs and capacities of humbler people. In this particular work, “Religion within the Limits of Mere Reason,” he is trying to show how a religion may be developed within the bounds of reason, but he realizes that he cannot reject all that is historical, even if such were his desire. He no doubt, also, had the censor in mind. Still further, he admitted that there were moral advantages consequent upon the thought of revelation which must not be lost sight of.²

In the matter of miracles Kant is somewhat more outspoken. “If a moral religion [which consists not in statutes and in observances, but in the disposition of the heart to regard all human duties as divine commands] should be established, then must all miracles, which history joins with its introduction, make the belief in miracles in general finally themselves unnecessary. For it betrays a degree of moral unbelief meriting punishment, if to the precepts of duty as they were originally written upon the heart of man by reason,—a man will not otherwise admit sufficient authority than when led to believe in them through miracles. If you do not see signs and wonders, you do not believe.”³ He also suggests that miracles may be from an evil as well as from a good source and that consequently it is frequently difficult to determine the source of the wonderful occurrence—and so to characterize it as a miracle or a work of the devil.⁴ He also says, “There are three kinds of delusions. . . . First, the belief that you can know [Erkennen] through experience something which we ourselves, when we think of it as happening according to the objective laws of experience, cannot possibly assume, viz., the belief in miracles.”⁵

¹ Kant: “Religion innerhalb,” Rosenkranz, Vol. X., p. 226.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. X., pp. 133, 159, 169.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. X., p. 99.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. X., p. 101.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. X., p. 234. Cf. p. 104, note.

Also in a letter to Fichte, Feb. 2, 1792, in which he suggests to him a way out of his difficulties, he reveals very clearly his own attitude to miracles. He says, "You still have a way left to you to bring your writing into agreement with the ideas of the censor, if it occurs to you to point out to him the difference between a dogmatic, sublime belief, raised above every doubt, and a merely moral assumption which supports itself upon moral grounds. . . . Then a religious belief propped up upon a belief in miracles could with a morally good consciousness safely express itself thus, 'I believe, dear Lord ! that is, I gladly assume, although I cannot sufficiently prove it to myself or to others ; help thou my unbelief ! that is, the moral belief in consideration of all that which I can make useful to myself out of the historical account of miracles, I have ; but I desire to possess the historical belief, so far as that could contribute to that end' " [that is, his moral betterment]. "My unintentional failure to believe [Nichtglaube] is not intentional impiety [Unglaube]." ¹ Kant did not, it would thus seem, say openly and emphatically that he did not believe in miracles. He no doubt foresaw just such trouble with the censor as Fichte experienced. Again, too, so far as there was any moral worth in accounts of miracles, Kant was willing to preserve that. But he seems not to have had any vital belief in such phenomena. He did not consider them essential to a religion within the limits of reason, a religion toward which he believed the race was slowly moving. From these considerations, coupled with the transcendence of his purely theoretical concept of God, it would seem that Kant was closely allied in thought with the English Deists, and that his conception would best be classed as transcendent. But there is still another line of thought bearing upon the problem.

It was characteristic of Kant to avoid extremes. In his first publication in which he criticizes both Leibnitz and Descartes he concludes by taking a mediating position. "The knowledge of these two extreme limits," he says, "must without difficulty determine the point where the truth from both sides will agree." ² Again

¹ Kant : Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. XI., p. 137.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. V., p. 231.

in characterizing his own critique he shows that he had followed a middle course. "The Critique of Reason shows the true middle path between the dogmatism which Hume attacked, and the scepticism which he wished to introduce; a middle path not like other middle paths which a man advises himself to fix upon as it were mechanically [a little from one, and a little from the other], and through which no man would be taught anything better, but such that a man can according to principles precisely determine it."¹ Kant also regarded his work not as negative and destructive, but as positive and constructive,² but had he favored either pantheism, or extreme deism which is but one stage removed from atheism, his work would have been negative. Consequently far juster does it seem to be from *a priori* considerations to characterize Kant's view as theistic in the sense that it takes neither horn of the dilemma but is somewhere between. There is also *a posteriori* evidence to this effect.

In his first Critique Kant discusses speculative theology and says, "Since under the concept of God a man is accustomed to understand not simply a blind-working external Nature as the root of things, but a highest Being, who through understanding and freedom ought to be the Creator of things, and *also this concept alone interests us*, so could a man strongly deny to the Deist all belief in God, and leave him merely the affirmation of an original Being or highest Cause. . . . We might say, The Deist believes in a God, the Theist, however, in a living God [summam intelligentiam]."³ Again he criticizes Deism⁴ on more than one occasion and expressly gives his approval to Theism. "Theism can finally just as little found the possibility of purpose in nature as a key to teleology," as Hylozoism of which he had been speaking, "although it [theism] has the preference over all attempts to explain the same in this, that it through the understanding which it attributes to the original Being, best

¹ Kant : Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. III., p. 136.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 386.

³ Kant : K. R. V. : B. Erdmann, p. 481.

⁴ Kant : Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. IV., p. 232 ; XI., p. 120.

secures the purposefulness of Nature for Idealism, and introduces a purposeful causality for the purpose of the same." It would seem best, therefore, to characterize Kant's view as theistic, though because of his slight regard for revelation and his rejection of miracles he approached the English Deists. It was just because his view was pronouncedly of neither extreme, but partook of both, that he was charged now with pantheism and now with extreme transcendence bordering upon atheism.

It needs to be added also that God in accordance with Kant's view was personal. This comes immediately from the attributes of will, understanding, and reason that Kant attached, and although there was room for the charge of anthropomorphism, still, as already pointed out, Kant was on his guard.

In closing this chapter upon Kant's concept of God, it remains to be said that not too much emphasis should be laid upon the attributes of God which Kant readily predicated in his "Religion within the Limits of Mere Reason." In that work Kant attempted to show how a religion could be built up on a basis of reason. But to succeed in such an undertaking it was necessary to show how much of what constituted religion, and in particular the Christian religion, could be appropriated. Those attributes have been mentioned so as to give completeness to Kant's thought. But the points that are most distinctive of his concept of God, are, first, that the conception of God belongs not to the sphere of theoretical Erkenntniss, but to the sphere of faith, and secondly, that when conceived at all adequately He is a moral Being.

CHAPTER III.

KANT AND LUTHER.

One does not usually associate Kant and Luther even in thought, nor does one naturally think of an influence exerted by the earlier man upon the later. In the main, this failure to connect the two is justified. Luther was at the head of a great religious movement, while Kant was the beginning of a great philosophical movement. Still further, it is often asserted that much of the scepticism of modern times had its origin in Kant, though he himself expressly asserted his own opposition to scepticism and materialism,¹ and his writings show that he had blazed out a path which avoided both of these generally so regarded evils. But there are resemblances between the two men which can not fail to catch the attention of the student of both, and these immediately raise the question as to whether or not Luther exerted any direct influence upon Kant. It was just these resemblances that led to this dissertation, and for the discussion of Ritschl, which is to follow, they need consideration here.

Luther inveighed against metaphysics and philosophy. It is true that he sometimes made use of Aristotle, Plato and other philosophers. At times, indeed, he spoke favorably of the schoolmen, as Duns Scotus, but for the most part his attitude was one of hostility, especially when it seemed to him that theology might be unfavorably influenced by the heathenish thoughts. This is particularly apparent in his conception of God as already pointed out. His general attitude might be stated thus: "Away with all metaphysics and metaphysical conceptions of God. The God revealed in Christ is the only God of worth for me!" To quote him briefly: "Theology should be empress, philosophy and other good arts should be her servants; they should not rule and be the

¹ Kant: Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. III., p. 140; I., p. 524; V., pp. 381, 392. K. R. V.: B. Erdmann, p. 555.

masters, as Servetus, Campanus and other fanatics [Schwärmer] declare. God preserves his dear Church which he carries as a mother carries her child, and protects it from such school and philosophical theology."¹ "How a man should rule, govern his home, build a house and other such things, he learns in philosophy and out of heathenish books, but nothing more. . . . Philosophy understands nothing about God. . . . A man should leave philosophy in its own circle, . . . and not mix it with theology."² "The devil has deceived us into leaving the day and seeking truth among the philosophers and heathen."³ He especially singles out the schoolmen and Aristotle and warns against them. "Recently," he says, "men held Aristotle the heathen in such honor that whoever denied him or opposed him was considered at Cologne the greatest heretic and was condemned. Further, since they did not understand Aristotle, the sophists have involved him in a great deal of obscurity. As for example that monk, who in a sermon in holy week wasted two hours upon this question, 'Whether quantity is really distinct from substance.'"⁴ Here, as is usual with Luther, by the sophists he means the schoolmen. From such passages as these, Luther's opposition to metaphysics and metaphysicians is very obvious.

Kant also had much to say against metaphysics. In his earliest work [1747] in a passage already quoted⁵ he says that metaphysics and other sciences are only on the threshold of sound knowledge. He wonders when they will be firmly established. Especially in his "Dreams of a Spirit-Seer" does he show his disgust for metaphysics. "Formerly," he says, "we wandered as did Democritus in empty space, whither the butterfly wings of metaphysics had taken us, and supported ourselves with ghostly forms."⁶ Later in his "Progress of Metaphysics since Leibnitz and Wolff" [1791]

¹ Luther: Walch Ed., Vol. XXII., p. 369.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. XXII., p. 60.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. XII., p. 13. Cf. VI., p. 165; VIII., p. 2121.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. XXII., p. 81.

⁵ Chapter II., p. 22.

⁶ Kant: Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. VII., p. 100. Cf. Paulsen: Immanuel Kant, p. 87.

he reviews the situation thus: "The fruitlessness of every attempt of metaphysics to extend itself in a theoretic-dogmatic way in its proper sphere, viz., the supernatural, . . . up to the end of the Wolff-Leibnitzian epoch, and at the same time the necessary failure of all future similar attempts, may be shown in this, that upon the theoretic-dogmatic way there is no help for metaphysics to reach its desired end, and all supposed knowledge in this field is transcendent, consequently totally empty."¹ Again in the same work he emphasizes the thought: "With the greatest assurance can it be set forth that until the time of Wolff and Leibnitz, and indeed including their time, metaphysics in view of its proper purpose has not made the least gain."² Without quoting more it is evident that Kant in his pre-critical period was very much out of conceit with metaphysics, and later in his life when he reviewed the whole course of metaphysics, he felt constrained to point out how little had been achieved.

In this there is a resemblance between Luther and Kant, but it is not great. Luther opposed because of his religious feelings and purposes; Kant criticised, and severely, too, but with the thought, the hope of producing something better to take the place of what had proved itself insufficient. He hoped for a new metaphysics. "One sees," says Paulsen, "that Kant took the name of a professor of metaphysics, which he officially bore, very seriously. His task, however, was not to destroy metaphysics but to build it up. All his investigations in the field of philosophy he looked upon as preparation for just that."³

Luther was concerned also with the limits of the human understanding. He insisted that our ordinary knowledge and wisdom extend only so far as there is matter and form. The reason is worthful in its own field but it is helpless in the field of faith. Especially is reason at fault when it tries to learn about God.⁴

¹ Kant: Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. I., p. 541.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 559. Cf. V., p. 35; I., pp. 164, 228, note; VII., p. 102.

³ Paulsen: Immanuel Kant, p. 246.

⁴ Luther: Walch Ed., Vol. I., p. 223; IX., pp. 717-718; XXII., p. 140; XII., p. 830.

But this point need not be dwelt upon since it has been considered in Chapter I.¹ Köstlin summarizes the matter as follows : "The reason of the natural, sinful, unredeemed man with its thoughts, concepts, consequences, etc., remains according to Luther's continual explanations a stranger to the truth contained in God's word, . . . indeed, an object of contradiction. . . . The things of this reason are particularly the things of the world, knowledge of them, and practical relations with them, . . . not, however, the superior, the knowledge of what is divine, the elevation of man to communion with God, the way of salvation, the things which concern blessedness ; the reason, said Luther, is concerned with just that which is beneath us, [inferior], and not with that which is above us."²

With Kant, too, the question was, "How far may the human reason extend?" In his "Dreams of a Spirit-Seer" he declares, "Metaphysics is a science of the limits of human reason,"³ and in his first Critique this was one of the main questions he sought to answer. And further, just as Kant indicated that the reason asks many questions that cannot be answered,⁴ so Luther dwells upon the innumerable questions the reason is constantly raising but without hope of answering them. Especially in what concerned God was the reason helpless. "Only what is revealed," he insisted, "can a man know." Kant, too, right here indicated clearly that the reason frames its concept of God, but it gets no content of reality with which to fill it. There is a real resemblance here which one cannot fail to note, but there is also a difference. Luther has the conception of ordinary knowledge and revelation. He is thoroughly religious. Kant practically did away with revelation. With him, real knowledge of God is theoretical Erkenntniss, and that is impossible. Men must be content with practical Erkenntniss in the sphere of morality. He is metaphysical and ethical.

Another resemblance between Kant and Luther is evident in

¹ Chapter I., pp. 10-13.

² Köstlin : "Luther's Theologie," German, Vol. II., p. 48.

³ Kant : Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. VII., p. 99.

⁴ Kant : K. R. V. : B. Erdmann, pp. 165, 487, 575.

the matter of rewards and punishment. Kant's position is too well known to be dwelt upon. Any thought of advantage or disadvantage vitiates the act. Luther, in one passage at least, expresses a similar thought. "The pious children of God," he says, "do what is good out of a good will and gladly; they seek no reward but simply God's honor and will; they are wholly brave and ready to do good, so far as it is possible, even if there were no heaven and no hell."¹ To be sure, Luther believed in a heaven and a hell, but the passage is none the less striking. One may not say that this was his general attitude upon the basis of a single passage, but it is significant since it occurs in his "*De Servo Arbitrio*," a work with which he later expressed great satisfaction.

Luther also made much of experience, as already indicated in Chapter I,² and upon this Kant also dwelt. With him all real knowledge begins with experience³ and is practically confined to experience actual or possible. It is true that he recognizes "*Erkenntniss a priori*," but that is different from the union of *Verstand* and *Sinnlichkeit*, which gives men ordinary knowledge.

There are, then, unmistakable resemblances between Kant and Luther in their attitude toward metaphysics, the limitation of the reason, value of rewards and punishments, and the thought of experience. These may be simply superficial resemblances. In fact, the differences which underlie the apparent resemblances have already been pointed out in part. A fuller discussion, however, is needed. This leads to a consideration of Pietism and Kant's relation to it, since there, in his religious environment, if at all, Kant was most likely to have received direct influence from Luther.

The Reformation, so far as Luther was concerned, was strictly a religious movement. Luther takes rank with Augustine, perhaps also with Paul, as a religious genius. It was a religious experience Luther had, and this led to his changed outlook upon life and his changed relations to the established Church. This for him

¹ Luther: Walch Ed., Vol. XVIII., p. 2255.

² Chapter I., pp. 16-18. Cf. Walch Ed., IX., pp. 416-418, 718.

³ Kant: K. R. V.: B. Erdmann, p. 41.

meant also a thoroughly moral life. The two were closely associated in his thought and practice. He laid the emphasis on the religious experience, but the moral life followed as a natural, indeed a necessary, concomitant. But Luther was not altogether understood by the men of his own day and by those who followed him in the immediately succeeding generations. Luther emphasized the thought of freedom. His own experience had meant just this to him. He outlined his thought in his "The Freedom of a Christian Man." He was a free man in Christ. But that freedom was inner freedom. "With regard to his outer man he was 'a useful servant and in subjection to every man.'"¹ Luther understood this relation and there was no disharmony in his own life.

But the term "freedom" had unfortunate significances for many of the rank and file in Lutheran churches. Freedom, then as now, was often interpreted as license. Luther frequently inveighed against the law, but by the law he meant what he found in the Bible opposed to the Gospel message of freedom in Christ. Those who heard him, however, did not always so understand him. A truth was understood as a half truth. Consequently there was much moral laxness in the Lutheran churches. Still further, two schools of thought grew up, one holding more closely by Luther with the emphasis upon the Bible, often, however, in a slavishly literal way, and the other following the lead of Melancthon, who, himself a humanist, emphasized cultural elements along with Biblical lore. In the century following Luther's, these two schools developed not a little animosity toward each other, and together constituted an orthodoxy far more rigid and exacting than the Roman Catholic had ever been. The energies of the leaders were thus directed against the Romanists on the one hand, and against each other on the other hand. The moral life of the ordinary church member may be well imagined. History was repeating itself. Julian, the Emperor in the middle of the fourth century, was turned from Christianity to Neoplatonism, partly because of moral laxity and indifference in the Church. The leaders were engaged in theological controversy. Again, there

¹ Höfding: "History of Modern Philosophy," Vol. I., p. 39.

was the "Thirty Years' War" [1618-1648] which laid Germany waste. That the full benefits of Luther's thought should not have been appropriated under these circumstances is not at all surprising. Out of these, together with many other contributing conditions, the so-called Pietistic movement was born.

Religion itself, in its expression, tends to become formal. It expresses itself quite extensively in ecclesiastical institutions, and these, as Mr. Spencer points out,¹ exert an extremely conservative influence upon society. The institution sums up the life of the past. What has been, should be, now and forever. The fact that the Lutheran churches had kept much of the old Catholic church service made in this direction. The Reformed churches rejected every thing which did not have a plain scriptural basis; the Lutheran churches kept all that was not expressly prohibited by the Bible. Consequently in Lutheran churches formalism and conventionality were easy. The particular type of religious life for which Luther stood could, therefore, very easily be lost sight of.

But history shows that such conditions do not last. The rhythm of which Spencer speaks, in his "First Principles,"² and to which he refers so often in his "Principles of Sociology," however much one may fail to agree with him in every detail, shows itself in the development of religion. After a period of formalism and moral laxity there comes a revival, just as after a revival there is likely to be a period of formality, a kind of return to type in either case. The see-saw between prophets and priests for centuries among the Hebrews, and the course of history within the Christian Church abundantly sustain this theory. There is a type of religious life that is enthusiastic, excessively emotional. It can be seen to-day in the so-called "Holiness" movement; it was evident a century ago in England in the "Wesleyan" movement; it showed itself in Germany in the latter half of the seventeenth century and is known as the "Pietistic" movement. The conditions were right, the movement appeared. By this no support is intended for any Hegelian necessity. It is simply that

¹ Spencer: "Principles of Sociology," Vol. III., p. 144.

² Spencer: "First Principles," p. 217.

throughout history such movements have come and gone. The conditions have been similar, the movements similar. Given a certain set of conditions, and one may expect certain reactions from men. The conditions in Germany at this time were similar to those that have frequently preceded a religious revival. In this particular instance the revival came. It centered about Philipp Jacob Spener [1635-1705].

The specific influences, which culminated in this movement, may be grouped under four heads, viz., the Mystics, the Theologians, the Singers, and the Prophets. Luther himself had been influenced by Bernhard of Clairvaux, Thomas à Kempis, and Gerson.¹ Other men in this later period, in large part no doubt by reason of their natural endowment, were influenced by the works of these same writers. Arndt, Müller, and Scriver may be mentioned among those mystically inclined who prepared the way for Pietism. The last mentioned, Scriver, was one of the most influential Lutheran theologians, and yet was inclined toward mysticism, and became the "first representative of the specific theological forerunners of Pietism."² In the second group may be mentioned Gerhard, Johann Valentin Andreaë, and as a representative of the so-called "Syncretistic" movement George Calixtus. The last mentioned was the "most independent and most influential among the Lutheran theologians of the seventeenth century"³ who belonged to the wing that followed Melancthon in emphasizing culture. The fact that he was a syncretist indicates that he had moved away from the stricter orthodoxy. The third group, viz., the Singers, played no inconsiderable part in the preparation for Pietism. This seventeenth century was rich in song. As Riegenbach says, "The more polemical-doctrinal the preaching, and the more scholastically subtle the theology becomes, so much the more do deep natures like Paul Gerhardt feel the need of bringing their longing for salvation and experience of it to poetical expression."⁴ The fourth group was

¹ Chapter I, pp. 3, 9.

² Herzog : Real-Encyclopaedie.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, Article, "Pietismus."

composed of prophets. "Deserving of this name were a number of men who about the middle of the seventeenth century raised their voices in an energetic and popularly drastic fashion to awaken the evangelical communities of Germany out of their religious apathy and dead formal churchliness."¹ Among them were three especially important men, Meyfart, Schuppius, and Grossgebauer. Many other influences were at work, but the most important come under these four heads.

As there were pre-Reformation reformers, so there were these pre-Pietism pietists; but just as Luther became the spokesman of a widespread consciousness that a reform should come, so Spener became the spokesman of a similar consciousness in his day. But the details of his development need not be touched here. Suffice it to say that soon after his settlement as pastor at Frankfort-am-Main [1666] he began to form little circles among his parishioners for the study of the Bible and for the development of a more moral type of religious life. This work grew, and he was imitated as well as criticized throughout Germany. In 1675 he published his "*Pia Desideria*," first as a preface to a new edition of Arndt's sermons, but soon afterwards as a separate work. In this "*Pia Desideria*" he stated that there were six things desirable:² (1) "An energetic furthering of a universal and fundamental intimacy with the Bible through private gatherings, *ecclesiolæ in ecclesia*; (2) the making valuable of the universal priesthood through coöperation of the laity at the spiritual congregational meetings, and through services in the homes; (3) the earnest consciousness of the fact that for the knowledge of Christianity there must be present a daily exercise of the same as a necessary complement and proof; (4) a change from polemic to a loving desire to help each other; (5) a reorganization of the theological curriculum in the universities so that students might not merely zealously pursue their studies, but also give evidence of a pious life; (6) a different kind of preaching which should avoid the merely rhetorical and endeavor to implant Christianity in the

¹ Real-Encyclopædie, Pietismus.

² *Ibid.*, Pietismus.

inner or new man. The soul of this preaching should be 'Faith,' and its effects the fruits of life." For twenty years Spener preached and worked at Frankfort, then was called to Dresden.

About this same time [1686] a similar movement showed itself at the University of Leipzig where Francke and Anton were Masters. In spite of opposition the movement grew. In 1691 Spener was called to Berlin and in 1694 Frederick I. founded the University of Halle, to the theological faculty of which Francke and Anton were called from Leipzig to join forces with Breithaupt who had been teaching theology at Halle¹ since 1691. This university became and was for many years the leading Pietistic university. The movement grew until by the end of the first third of the eighteenth century it became the controlling religious movement in Germany, but with this victory it had gained went also the beginning of its decline. Like all such movements it tended to become formal, and then, too, the new Wolff-Leibnitzian philosophical development hastened its decay. By the end of the eighteenth century it had ceased to be a vital force.

The faults of Pietism may be gathered from the charges Löscher and his companions, its opponents, formulated against it: (1) Indifferentism towards the truth of the revealed faith as formulated in the symbolic books; (2) undervaluation of the sacraments and the church office; (3) dimming of the teaching about justification through the assertion that saving faith must not only be received and held, but also acted; (4) the teaching concerning the triumph upon earth, or chiliasm [*i. e.*, pre-millinarianism]; (5) terminism, or the teaching concerning the period of mercy allowed each man within the limits of his earthly life; (6) perfectionism, that is, increased emphasis upon holiness under the presupposition of the possibility of reaching an assured Christian perfection; (7) reformatism, that is, the unnecessary abolishment of church usages, and connected with that (8) the too great favoring of extra church exercises with a view to piety, which very easily leads to schism; (9) mysticism, and the preference for fanatical peculiarities; (10) the rejection of things non-essen-

¹ Real-Encyclopaedie, Pietismus.

tial, concerning which Pietism asserted, they could not in the abstract be offensive, because they did not appear so in the abstract, but in the individual they were always objectionable; (11) the neglect of earnest theological science, and (12) the church schism caused through the whole movement."¹ In commenting upon these charges Riggenbach says, "Undeniably they were all relatively justified."² The reason for adverse criticism is easy to see. The leaders of any such movement voice in part a common feeling. When they have expressed themselves, many others find their own thoughts and feelings expressed. The movement spreads rapidly and soon gets beyond the control of the leaders. Many elements upon which the leaders did not reckon become associated. There are excesses of one sort or another upon which opponents fasten their attention and the attention of the world. This has been so, perhaps always will be so.

But to return to Kant and Luther. Pietism was a revival of the religious spirit so evident in Luther, and while in some respects it was not exactly like what Luther favored and emphasized — for example, it laid more stress on regeneration and less on justification than did Luther — still its leaders together with their insistence upon Bible study, insisted upon a closer acquaintance with Luther. Consequently, as already observed, if any definite, direct influence from Luther was to reach Immanuel Kant it would be most likely through the channel of Pietism with which he was historically connected.

Königsberg was a center of Pietistic influence. The movement began there independent of Spener. In the years 1680–1684 there studied at Königsberg a man named Theodor Gehr, who became the founder of Pietism in that place. From the disputes then raging in theological circles Gehr became convinced that the fundamental note of love in the spirit of Christ was as little present as were the accompanying virtues of humility and sincerity. Consequently he withdrew into his own inner life until a new experience came to him. It was on St. Matthew's Day, 1691, that the

¹ Real-Encyclopaedie, Pietismus.

² *Ibid.*, Pietismus.

divine light, as he expressed it, broke through. This he interpreted as the new birth. From that day he dated his Pietism. Up to that time he had never met Spener nor any of his followers. In 1693, however, Gehr came into contact with Spener in Saxony, and thenceforward until 1733 the movement in Königsberg took the course of Spener's. In 1694 Gehr met Francke and from him obtained further impetus in line with the general movement. The outcome of these meetings with the leaders of Pietism was the establishment of a school at Königsberg similar to one at Halle.

The first director of this school was J. H. Lysius, a man whom Spener sent thither. The instruction was very naturally decidedly religious. For the smallest children there was instruction in the catechism of Luther and in the Bible; for those somewhat older there was Spener's catechism, and for the oldest the catechization of Dietrich. There were also studies in history, geography, and mathematics. The whole instruction in the school, even the discipline, was brought into relation to religion. This particular régime continued until the year 1733 when Franz Albert Schultz became the leader. He had become pastor of the church at Königsberg in 1731, and in a genuinely pietistic fashion had sought to awaken the dead hearts. In the year mentioned, 1733, he took charge of the school. As is well known Kant's parents were members of the church where Schultz preached, and he was a frequent visitor at their home. It is not surprising, then, that Kant should have attended this particular school. He passed through all the grades from the earliest to the last and gained his preparation for the university. He was in the school from 1732 until 1741.

One of the fundamental precepts of the school was this — "He who wishes to apply well the time of his youth and to lay the foundation of earthly success, must first while in school, together with all his other activities, seek to awaken and to sustain thoughts toward God, who is everywhere present and with whom a rightly developed heart alone is valued." Each day soon after rising, which took place at five o'clock, there was a prayer service in each

room in the presence of the room inspector, who either himself offered prayer or had one of the children do it. Then a short hymn was sung, and a whole or half chapter from the Bible was read and briefly expounded for their spiritual development. At the beginning and end of each lecture there was a brief awakening prayer. This term "awakening" is significant. It clearly indicates the pietistic temper, since it was conceived by the Pietists that the beginning of the religious life must be an awakening from the sleep of sin to self-criticism and penitence. Each day closed at 9 o'clock, with an evening prayer. Every day, also, from 7 until 8 there were five classes held for religious instruction, that is, for the teaching of theology. The work at that hour consisted in learning the catechism, or as it was then termed, the "order of salvation," from a number of Bible passages and Bible history. In the higher classes was given a fundamental systematic knowledge of divine truth and the books of the Old and New Testaments. This whole instruction was dominated with the idea that the youths should learn what would best serve for their true peace; that they should make room in their souls for the Spirit of God and so gain an inviolate conscience even in their earliest years. Still further, their instruction in the other departments was affiliated with religious truth. Greek was taught from the New Testament, and history was grouped about the Bible. Every Monday from 6 until 7 in the afternoon the inspector had an edification period in which what would make for order and morality in the school was explained. Each Friday morning from 5 until 6 a prayer meeting was held to which the older people also gathered. A hymn was sung, one or another practical truth from the Bible explained, a prayer offered by the inspector or one of the pupils, and in closing a verse from some hymn was repeated in unison. Each week the director catechized the school, and each Sunday from 10 until 11 in the morning the inspector held an exhortation service, and from 8 until 9 each Sunday there was a public catechizing at the church. Very searching tests were also applied to the children when it came time for them to participate in the communion service. Kant shared in this religious training

for years. He was in the school from 1732 until 1741 when he entered Königsberg University.¹

At the university Kant was under the instruction of Martin Knutzen, who was both a Pietist and a follower of Wolff in philosophy, and further, the influence of Schultz, who had become professor of theology at the university, was still over him. Whether Kant was enrolled among the theological students or not is a question that has been much discussed. Benno Erdmann² goes into the matter in detail and concludes that Kant, if enrolled as a theologian, had but formal relations with that department of the university, and gave most of his time to distinctively secular studies. Paulsen also expresses doubt as to whether Kant ever seriously purposed to study theology,³ and the amount of scientific and philosophical knowledge he shows in his earliest publication⁴ would seem to indicate where his interest was and where his time had been spent. It seems very well established, however, that he did take a course of lectures in theology under Schultz.⁵ But whether that be so or not, "it is beyond doubt," as Hollmann says, that while Kant was at the school of which Schultz was the director he did have lectures on theology by that same man.⁶ Still further, the intimate relations between Schultz and Kant's family, and Kant himself while growing up, make it altogether probable that Kant knew quite fully Schultz's religious and theological bias. It becomes important, therefore, to know just what theological views Schultz held. If he was altogether pietistic, or better, if he emphasized Luther's distinctive teaching in his presentation of theological truth, then might be expected a definite,

¹ This matter has been considered quite at length in order that the pietistic character of Kant's early environment might be evident. Most of this material dealing with Pietism at Königsberg is condensed from a reprint in separate form of George Hollmann's "Prolegomena zur Genesis der Religionsphilosophie Kants." It first appeared in *Altpreuss Monatschrift*, Bd. XXXVI.

² B. Erdmann: "Martin Knutzen u. seiner Zeit," p. 133.

³ Paulsen: *Immanuel Kant*, p. 34.

⁴ "Schätzung der lebendigen Kräfte," 1747.

⁵ B. Erdmann: "Martin Knutzen u. seiner Zeit," p. 140. Hollmann: *Prolegomena*, p. 50. Paulsen: *Immanuel Kant*, p. 34.

⁶ Hollmann: *Prolegomena*, p. 49.

direct Luther influence upon Kant at this time. But if, on the other hand, distinctive traces of Luther be few and almost altogether lacking, then one could hardly maintain any such direct relation between Luther and Kant. In other ways Kant may have come into contact with what was fundamental in Luther, but the most likely way seems to be the one here considered.

The lectures on theology which Schultz gave at Königsberg from 1740 until 1747 while Kant was a student there have been preserved and are in the University Library at Königsberg under the title "*Theologia Thetico-Antithetica*," Domino Francisco Alberto Schultz. The work is in Latin, not printed but in handwriting, and since this changes at times, it seems quite likely, as Hollmann suggests, that the lectures are to-day just as they were dictated by Schultz. These practically sum up Schultz's whole theology.¹ The very first sentence sounds an unpietistic note: "There is nothing without its sufficient reason." This is Wolfian, and introduces to a new phase of the whole matter.

Wolff as a professor of philosophy at Halle so incurred the hostility of the Pietists there that in 1723 he was forced to leave the university. His teaching was said to be Determinism, Mechanism, and Atheism. Until 1740 he was professor at Marburg, but in that year on account of the changed feeling at Halle and the popular demand that justice be done him, he was recalled to Halle where he lectured until his death in 1754. Now, Leibnitz may be regarded as the father of German Idealism. Just as Democritus shattered the Being of Parmenides and sent the particles whirling through space, so Leibnitz shattered the substance of Spinoza. The unit of his system was the monad, corresponding somewhat to the atom of the physicist, but being in reality not physical but metaphysical, not matter but a center of force. His system had but one unifying principle, and that was rationalistic. Wolff took Leibnitz' thoughts, changed them somewhat, really returned to the older dualism, and constructed a system which in the second third of the eighteenth century became dominant throughout Germany. It is not surprising, then, that the

¹ Hollmann : *Polegomena*, p. 50.

Pietists at Halle objected to Wolff's teaching. Its inner principle, for he was with Leibnitz equally rationalistic, was opposed to the principle of Pietism. Schultz was philosophically a thorough-going Wolffian. Hippel in his biography said, "I heard lectures on theology by a philosopher, the greatest Wolffian, as Wolff himself is reported to have said: 'If anybody has understood me, it is Schultz of Königsberg.'"¹ Schultz was a Pietist, but he was also a philosopher, a thorough Wolffian.

But to return to the lectures by Schultz. The plan of those lectures and their bias are somewhat as follows: That part he termed "Thetico" constituted his positive teaching upon theological subjects; the "Antithetica," which appears in alternate chapters, is polemical. Whatever objections he knew of that had been advanced against the positive truths he taught, he presented in this "Antithetica" with their appropriate arguments. He then proceeded to demolish those arguments, and in that way established his own truths more securely. Running through the lectures, also, is a distinction between what is theoretical and what is practical. The distinctive Christian truths are stated and supported, then the author points out the practical truths that result. Still further, Schultz distinguishes between the province of philosophy and that of theology. He is not averse to the use of philosophy, but difficult questions are disposed of by saying that they belong to the sphere of philosophy and not to theology. He often refers to psychology, metaphysics, logic and ethics, and praises both Wolff and Leibnitz.

The principal use that he makes of metaphysics is in the opening sections when he lays the foundation for his argument for the existence of God. It is in this connection that he uses the words already quoted, "There is nothing but what has a sufficient reason." His conception of God is the one then current, viz., a most perfect Being, necessarily existing, omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent, eternal, etc. This is developed in a purely *a priori* fashion. "Nothing absolutely exists except God."²

¹ Hollmann: Prolegomena, p. 23.

² "Theologia Thetico-Antithetica," p. 77.

"Of all realities God is the Cause and Author."¹ He is wise and good, absolutely happy; he is love, he loves good and hates evil. He has intellect and will, but is devoid of emotions, and all apparently anthropomorphic attributes applied to him in the Bible must be understood in a manner befitting divinity. The glory of God is the great duty of man. After outlining his conception of God metaphysically he then derives the same from the Bible. This is his method in general, though the need of using metaphysics is not so great after the early sections. He outlines the "federal theory" of man's relation to Adam, to Christ, and to God, and emphasizes the theory of satisfaction in Christ's death. He often refers to Grotius in the highest terms and frequently refers also to the symbols of the Lutheran church and indicates his own substantial agreement with them. He emphasizes the fact of his own orthodoxy. He enlarges upon the Lutheran theory of the Lord's Supper. In fact the book as a whole might well be classed with the ordinary strict orthodox theologies which had been published in the preceding century.

There are some points, however, that are indicative of Pietism. He defines theology as a "practical science,"² and it was the practical side that especially came to the front in Pietism. He refers to Luther fifteen times, quoting from him nearly every time. This is not often, in view of the fact that there are nearly 900 pages in the book, but it is in line with the pietistic tendency. He devotes eleven pages to a discussion of the intellectual attributes of God, and seventy-six pages to his practical attributes, or the will of God. Again, the theologians he quotes from are nearly all of them those connected with or favorable to the pietistic movement. He especially praises Musæus, Buddeus, Gerhard and Breithaupt, and in his practical recommendations he refers to men distinctively pietistic, as for example, Isaac Watts, Richard Baxter, Abbadie, Freylinghausen, Spener, Thomas Goodwin, Arndt and Sebastian Schmid. Not that all of these men were technically Pietists, but their spirit and temper of mind put them in that class.

¹ "Theologia Thetico-Antithetica," p. 176.

² *Ibid.*, p. 2.

There can be no doubt, therefore, of the pietistic character of this book and of the author, but it was Pietism that had become in large measure rationalized, and this very rationalizing was diametrically opposed in principle to Pietism. It was just this, as evidenced in the Wolff-Leibnitzian philosophy, that accomplished the overthrow of the pietistic movement, and when found in Schultz and his theology the mixed quality of the religious life that was his must be inferred.

The striking contrast between these lectures by Schultz and a strictly pietistic work, "The Foundation of Theology" by Freylinghausen, first published in 1703, makes the thought of the last paragraph all the more apparent.

Freylinghausen was influenced by Francke and Breithaupt at Erfurt in 1690. He became Francke's right hand man and was associated with him in church work for twenty years. They went to Halle together and Freylinghausen not long after married Francke's daughter. His book became very popular and was used in most of the pietistic gymnasiums. It reached its tenth edition in 1741. The whole tone and method of treatment are almost totally unlike what one finds in Schultz's lectures.

In the preface he says: "The Christian reader will find nothing else in this little book, than what is grounded in the dear word of God, and concerning which the symbolical books of our evangelical church and the published expositions . . . of other Christian theologians give witness."¹ Later, at the end of the preface he gives a long quotation from Arndt, then in the first section of the book proper says, "The knowledge of God is of two sorts, viz., a universal or natural knowledge, and a particular or supernatural. The natural knowledge is planted in the nature of all men by God himself, and is, so to speak, a remaining spark of the light of the created divine image. From this a man knows that there must be a God, from whom everything comes, who rules everything and before whom, as an eternal, all-powerful, and just Being, a man should stand in fear. The supernatural is that which is acquired through the enlightenment of the Holy Ghost by means of the

¹ Freylinghausen: "Grundlegung der Theologie," p. 8.

word of God, in which God has revealed himself particularly according to his being, and his loving will concerning our salvation in Christ Jesus."¹ "If a man asks what God is," he again says, "the Bible teaches that he is a spiritual and invisible Being, and of himself and of all other things he is the Source, Ground, and Origin, which especially the name Jehovah signifies."² This is, indeed, as metaphysical as with Schultz, but his method is different. He begins with the Bible. All through the book he quotes almost exclusively from the Bible and from Luther. His quotations from Luther are especially numerous, and not infrequently he closes a long discussion with such a quotation as if that settled the matter. He uses the expression "Love of God in Christ Jesus," so characteristic of Luther, not in a quotation, but as if it were expressive of his own thought and feeling, though not original with himself. Similar expressions also often occur. Again, he quotes from Luther a passage peculiarly characteristic of Luther. "The name God and Lord has something terrifying in itself, so long as it is thought of in connection with his majesty, but the added names of gracious and merciful [gnädiger u. barmherziger] have somewhat of comfort and joy, and I do not know whether God anywhere in the Bible has let himself be named more adequately [liebreicher³]." In considering good works, he is also true to Luther. He quotes from Luther's "Christian Liberty," but he does so in an appreciative way. "These two sayings are true: Good pious works never make a good pious man, but a good pious man performs good pious acts."⁴ It is true that he lays more stress on regeneration than on justification. In this he was a Pietist rather than a close follower of Luther, but taking the book as a whole it is quite certain that Luther himself would have been pleased with it.

No one can read the lectures by Schultz and then compare them with this book by Freylinghausen without feeling the vast difference between them. Freylinghausen was a thorough Pietist, near

¹ Freylinghausen: "Grundlegung der Theologie," p. 2.

² *Ibid.*, p. 4.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 322.

the very fountain head of Pietism ; Schultz, also, was a Pietist, but his philosophy had changed the current of his feelings and given him a different outlook upon life.

Still another man to be considered in getting at the influences upon Kant in this early period is Martin Knutzen. He was professor of philosophy at Königsberg when Kant was a student there, and it was under him that Kant took a great deal of work.¹ Knutzen was himself a pupil of Schultz,² and was both a Pietist and a Wolffian. One of his works, "Philosophical Proof of the Truth of the Christian Religion," very clearly indicates his temper of mind.

He is philosophical of course. He frequently refers to Wolff, the principle of "sufficient reason," and to ethics. He shows wide reading and makes more references to other writers than did Schultz or Freylinghausen. He is very evidently a partisan and shows heat when touching upon miracles and the resurrection. He does not, however, show much that is closely connected with Luther, in fact, almost nothing at all. In defining the Christian religion he says, "By the Christian religion I understand the teaching concerning the way, or the art, or the manner by which eternal happiness [Glückseligkeit] can be gained, contained as it is in the books of Scripture which we Christians honor as a divine revelation."³ It is true that he here, like Luther, regards the Bible as a revelation, but Luther went a step further in emphasizing Christ as the supreme revelation. To quote him again ; "It cannot be contradicted that the teaching of Jesus Christ is not a human discovery, but a holy religion and revelation."⁴ Here the emphasis is on the teaching. Still further he insists upon the reality of revelation. Further along he says, "Who does not see that the Christian religion is worth the most earnest endeavor, and with all justice is named the religion of the wise,"⁵ and he adds in brackets "religio prudentum." No more need be said

¹ B. Erdmann : "Martin Knutzen u. seiner Zeit," pp. 4, 136, 144.

² Hollmann : Prolegomena, p. 27.

³ Knutzen : "Beweis der Wahrheit der Christ. Religion," p. 1.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 235.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 245.

about this book in general. It is not the same as Schultz's lectures, but is to be classed with them rather than with such a work as Freylinghausen's.

Erdmann ¹ maintains that Knutzen remained a Pietist throughout his life, and Hollmann ² says practically the same in regard to Schultz, though at the same time both remained Wolffians. But what does that mean? No more and no less than to say of a man to-day that he is a Baptist, a Methodist, or a Quaker, though he has accepted the theory of evolution with all its implications. It means no more than to say that a man still retains his membership in an evangelical church, though in his thinking he is considerably removed from the usual interpretation placed upon that church.

To summarize the argument thus far it may be said that Kant while at school was under very strict pietistic discipline, but in the university he was profoundly influenced by Knutzen and Schultz, as his first work in 1747 clearly shows. He was born and grew up in a distinctively pietistic environment, but when he reached young manhood, Pietism itself had taken on a new color, and by ³ 1742 it was being crowded out by the new rationalistic tendencies. And that was the very time at which Kant was beginning his work at the university. These new tendencies had full play upon him through both Knutzen and Schultz so that his mind went to the opposite pole from that which was characteristically pietistic. Further, elements of Luther did not figure very prominently in his development. One would expect them in his religious environment, but while present in a pietistic form while he was at school, they were practically absent while he was at the university where he did his thinking.

But there is still another side to this matter. Kant has been considered in relation to Pietism, but there remains also his relation to Deism. This was touched upon in the previous ⁴ chapter, but demands fuller treatment here.

¹ B. Erdmann: "Martin Knutzen u. seiner Zeit," p. 50.

² Hollmann: *Prolegomena*, pp. 24, 27.

³ B. Erdmann: "Martin Knutzen u. seiner Zeit," p. 40.

⁴ Chapter II., pp. 38-41.

From the time of the Renaissance down to the beginning of the seventeenth century, the thought of a natural religion as opposed to a revealed religion had been developing. "This notion was introduced to a wider circle, and in a completely elaborated form, by Lord Herbert of Cherbury, in his work, '*De Veritate*'¹ [Paris, 1624]." "A second work by this same man '*De Religione gentilium errorumque apud eos causis*' [London, 1645] was closely connected with it in thought."² By the end of the seventeenth century the thoughts in these books and in others similar, together with the mathematical-physical treatises then appearing developed into the so-called Deistic movement in England. Other causes contributed.

The seventeenth century in England had for the most part been a period of struggle. It was the period when the Puritans and the High Church party were struggling with each other; the period in which the monarchy had been overthrown and the Commonwealth established, only in turn to be set aside when the monarchy was restored; it was the period of struggle between the Anglicans and the Roman Catholics after the Restoration, resulting finally in the expatriation of James II. With the accession of William and Mary in 1688 the prevailing desire was for peace. The people were exhausted. Still further, the House of Hanover was not popular, whereas the Stuarts, especially in exile, took hold of the people's imagination. The government, therefore, wishing for peace and quiet, encouraged toleration, which became the watchword both in religion and in politics. Enthusiasm in any form was frowned upon. Now it was just this soil that was especially favorable for the development of natural religion, emphasizing as it did broad principles of humanity and minimizing the sects of Christianity, even Christianity itself.

Some of the most important writers of this period were Shaftesbury, Clarke, Wollaston, Hutcheson, Home, Butler, Paley, Bentham, Locke, Bishop Tillotson, Cudworth, Connibear, Toland, Collins, Tindal, Chubb, Morgan and Bolingbroke. Of these the

¹ Höffding: "History of Modern Philosophy," Vol. I., p. 64.

² Real-Encyclopaedie, Deismus. Tröltzsch.

last six are ranked as Deists, while the others were either Theists or concerned simply with ethical and political writings. There was, however, one common principle, viz., emphasis upon the human reason. Deists and Theists alike were at one in this. The Deists resolved Christianity into natural religion, and natural religion was simply morality, obedience to the laws of nature. The Theists were differentiated from the Deists simply in that they, in opposition to the Deists, maintained the reality of revelation and miracles. Their efforts were directed to show that Christianity was reasonable. To them there was nothing in it contradictory to reason. Because Christianity has the Bible, it is superior to natural religion, since there is greater clearness and certainty as to what constitutes a virtuous life, and assurance of a future life. But all of these men regarded themselves as Christians and were earnest in their efforts for virtuous living.

The matter may, also, be put in a slightly different way. They all believed in God, and their view of him was transcendent. The Deists conceived that God created the world but did not thereafter interfere with its operations. The Theists were at one with them in their thought of God as Creator, but they maintained that he from time to time took an active part in the running of the machine, and consequently contended for the possibility and actuality of revelation and miracles.

The works of these English writers were not unknown to the Germans of this period. Many of them were translated into German¹ and others were known in the original. Some of the German professors travelled in England and lectured upon English philosophy upon their return. For example, "C. H. Raffolt was for many years in England and early in the period from 1730 to 1740 lectured at Königsberg University upon the English language and philosophy."² Both Schultz and Knutzen make frequent reference to these writers. Schultz refers to Burnett, a Protestant historical writer, to Clarke, and to minor writers, as Goodwin, Watts and Baxter. Knutzen refers to Leland, Lardner,

¹ B. Erdmann: "Martin Knutzen u. seiner Zeit," p. 45.

² *Ibid.*, p. 114.

Chubb, Toland, Tindal, Collins, Woolston, Samuel Chandler, Clarke, Goodwin, Baxter, Herbert of Cherbury, Joseph Truman, Ditton and several others. Wolff, also, mentions Clarke, Leibnitz had a long correspondence with him, and Lambert, in a letter to Kant also mentions him.¹ A Deistic influence in Königsberg in this period may not be overlooked.

Now all this is significant as bearing upon the theological or religious temper of mind of Schultz and Knutzen. Hollmann says, "The Pietists came to view reason and religious belief as being on about the same level,"² and it would seem that he was fully justified in that view in the case of Schultz and Knutzen. Further, while Knutzen opposes the Deists whom he mentions and classes the whole movement with Socinianism, he approves the Theistic writers, and at the end of his own book already described he speaks of Christianity as the "religio prudentum" and as being in the "highest degree conformable to reason."³ There is, further, a great similarity between this book, "Philosophical Proof of the Truth of Christianity" and Clarke's Boyle Lectures of 1705 entitled "A Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God." Knutzen lays more emphasis upon divine revelation and miracles than Clarke does, yet the similarity in treatment is quite striking.

Approaching the matter from the other point of view, both Schultz and Knutzen seem to be Theists in the sense applied to the English writers so-called at that time. Schultz frequently uses Leibnitz' watch illustration which is wholly in line with the thought of an absentee God. With Descartes and the Occasionalists God had immediate relations with men in bridging over the dualism between body and soul. Leibnitz with his "pre-established harmony" removed God to a distance. This is exactly the position of the Deists, but since Schultz and Knutzen insisted upon revelation and miracles they may best be classed as Theists.

¹ Kant : Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. I., p. 367.

² Hollmann : Prolegomena, p. 71-72.

³ Knutzen : "Beweis der Wahrheit d. Christ. Religion," p. 245.

Because of this English influence which undoubtedly was exerted upon Kant, and because of the transcendence of his purely theoretical concept of God, and because he practically did away with revelation and miracles, one is strongly tempted to class him with the English Deists. But because of the immanence which seems to lurk in his thought of the practical reason, because of his own criticism of Deism, because of his speaking of God as Sustainer of the world, and because of the feeling one gets in reading him that, explain it as one may, there is a somewhat lying back of the phenomena which is their immediate cause and which has its own explanation in God, he needs to be classed not as a Deist but as a Theist, as explained in the preceding chapter.

In summarizing now the discussion of this chapter it may be said that when one considers Luther's conception of God and Kant's, and in connection therewith the general view of each, there are some rather striking resemblances, which immediately start the question: Did the earlier writer have any direct, definite influence upon the later? Such influence, if it existed, would most naturally be sought in the relations Kant had with the religious life of his day. Now, while Pietism was a revival in large measure of the special type of religious life so prominent in Luther, and while it was a pietistic circle Kant grew up in, still the nerve of that particular kind of religion had been seriously affected by the Wolffian philosophy. The men at the university with whom Kant had most to do may be better classed as English Theists than as good examples of Pietism. To a degree at any rate, they rationalized their religious life, and that very rationalizing was deadly in its effects upon true Pietism. Still further, the development of the two men, Kant and Luther, was exactly opposite. Luther, while a student at the university, had a secular life in view. His father wanted him to be a lawyer, and he then saw no reason to do otherwise. When his student days were over he decided to take up theology. Then came his special religious experience which became the dominant factor in that part of the Reformation for which he was responsible. His change was from

the merely secular to what was distinctively religious. Kant, on the other hand, was saturated in that particular kind of religion in his boyhood. It would seem that his parents, especially his mother, wanted him to be a theologian. "Who would have thought," exclaimed one of his earlier companions, "that he would not be a Pietist, in view of his childhood and youth!"¹ But from this special type of religiousness Kant moved out into distinctive philosophical thought. He insisted upon bringing everything to the bar of reason. He did not lose his interest in religion, as his "Religion within the Limits of Mere Reason" shows, but it was a reasonable religion. His special interest was in morality. It was this aspect of God as well as of men that he emphasized.

Now it is right here, in this matter of the moral betterment of men, that Kant and Luther come into closest agreement, and yet the dependence of the later writer upon the earlier except in a very general way can hardly be asserted. Luther desired the moral betterment of men. It was in large part because he saw the moral laxity among men and the failure of the Church to remedy the matter that he began his Reformation. He scouted metaphysics and all theorizing, and emphasized what was practical. He especially praised the first edition of Melancthon's "Loci Communes" because the metaphysical was put in the background and the practical brought to the front. The Pietists aimed at the same thing, the moral betterment of men. They dwelt upon the practical, and Schultz in his lectures, as already pointed out, distinguished between what was theoretical and what was practical. This shows itself continually in Kant. But this is hardly indicative of an influence extending from Luther to Kant. The distinction between theoretical and practical was not confined to Luther and the Pietists. It was a general one. Hume calls attention to it as a distinction generally recognized² and one would not say that he got it from Luther. Nor is it necessary to seek some special outside influence to account for Kant's bent

¹ Hollmann: *Prolegomena*, p. 28.

² Hume: "Treatise of Human Nature," Bk. III., Pt. I., § 1, p. 3.

toward morality. Socrates emphasized the ethical, as did also Aristotle and Spinoza. It has always been true that the greatest thinkers have capped their systems with ethics. Still further, a definite influence directing Kant to ethics if sought at all is right at hand in the English Deists and Theists. Emphasis upon morality was one of their distinguishing marks. In fact, they lost sight of religion in their zeal for morality.

In view, then, of the discussion in this chapter, it may be fairly concluded that the resemblances which force themselves upon the attention of one who studies both Kant and Luther are not very vital, nor do they necessarily betoken an influence of the great German Reformer brought directly to bear upon the greater German Philosopher. They are in some cases superficial, and in others simply suggestive of a common Church inheritance. Even in the matter of morality where Kant and Luther approached each other most nearly it is not certain that any great contribution made its way from the earlier to the later man. It may better be explained as evidence of Kant's own moral genius, or perhaps in some degree derived from England. There are, therefore, so far as these two men themselves are concerned practically two independent sources, the blending of which in Ritschlianism it is the purpose of the following chapters to trace.

CHAPTER IV.

RITSCHL'S CONCEPTION OF GOD.

At the beginning of the discussion of Kant's conception of God in Chapter II., attention was directed to the difference between the age in which Kant lived and the one in which Luther wrought. But however great may have been that difference, and it was indeed great, far greater was it between Kant's period and Ritschl's. Though two centuries and a half intervened in the former case and only a century in the latter, that century was crowded fuller of events and thoughts than, perhaps, any preceding. Aside from the French Revolution and the Napoleonic era, which in themselves gave a vast amount of material for thought, there was the changed outlook upon life which Kant's own works furnished. As Copernicus revolutionized men's views of the external world, so Kant revolutionized the inner world; and then close upon his heels, so to speak, came Fichte with his subjective idealism, Schelling with his objective idealism, and Hegel with his "Welt-Geist," who, if they did not give more worthwhile thoughts than Kant did, at least gave food for reflection. In addition need to be mentioned Herder's rather romantic theology, Schleiermacher's combination of Spinozism and Kantianism tinged with romanticism, and the works of lesser theologians, as Dorner, Tieftrunk, Feuerbach, Philippi, Thomasius and a host of others, together with Strauss' "Das Leben Jesu," especially productive of discord, and Biblical criticism which was put forward with rapid strides by some of Germany's ablest thinkers. With all this Ritschl was familiar, as the first volume of his "Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung" clearly shows, and one may also say unhesitatingly that he was more familiar with the history of the Church and its doctrines than was either Kant or Luther, and undoubtedly more familiar with ancient philosophy than Luther was, and not improbably more familiar with it than was Kant, for an accu-

rate knowledge of the history of philosophy was not Kant's strong point, not because of any inability on his part to grasp it, but, because the subject was not treated then so thoroughly as now. With all the light, then, of ancient and modern philosophy, science and theology shining upon him, it is not without a large measure of interest that one seeks to ascertain what the conception of God was that Ritschl gave.

To begin with, Ritschl was a dualist. Not, however, a crude dualist, but an "aspect" dualist should he be termed. In the given content of consciousness a line of demarcation appeared, upon one side of which were "things" ordinarily so-called, and upon the other "things of the spirit." Body and soul, matter and spirit, nature and spirit are the terms in which he expressed this dualism. "In the theory of things," he says, "it is taken for granted that our Ego is not of itself the cause of sensations, perceptions, etc., but that these peculiar activities of the soul are stimulated by its coexistence with things of which the human body is also reckoned one."¹ Again, "Things are either spirit or matter."²

For this dualism he goes back, as he himself maintains, to Aristotle. He contends that the term "metaphysics" has been used in two distinct senses, and indicates his own preference for the earlier. "Some understand by metaphysics, not that elementary knowledge of things in general which ignores their division into nature and spirit, but such a universal theory as shall be at once elementary and the final and exhaustive science of all particular ordered existence, but they do so at their own risk."³ "First Philosophy," on the other hand, "according to Aristotle, is devoted to an investigation of the universal grounds of all being. Now the things with which our knowledge deals are divided into nature and spiritual life. When we are investigating the grounds common to all being, we abstract from the particular qualities which constitute for us the difference between

¹ Ritschl: "Rechtfertigung u. Versöhnung," English, III., p. 18.

² *Ibid.*, p. 238.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

nature and spirit, and enable us to regard them as heterogeneous entities. Natural and spiritual phenomena concern metaphysics only in so far as they may be conceived as things in general. For the conditions of knowledge common to them both are crystallized in the conception of the thing. Thus metaphysical conceptions, it is true, include and regulate all other acts of knowledge which involve the specific peculiarity of nature and spirit. They explain how it is that the human mind, having had experientially perceptions of special kinds, differentiates things in consequence into natural things and spiritual beings."¹ "But" he adds, "it does not follow from the position of metaphysics as superordinate to experiential knowledge, that metaphysical conceptions give us a more profound and valuable knowledge of spiritual existence than can be gained from psychology and ethics." In connection with this it is of value to notice that Ritschl rejected Materialism, Pantheism, and Monistic Idealism.²

With this dualism in the background, it is noteworthy that Ritschl, in the further statement of the framework of his thought, calls attention to three special points of reference. "Three points," he says, "are necessary to determine the circle by which a religion is completely represented — God, man, and the world."³ God is on the side of spirit, "the purely spiritual Being,"⁴ differentiated from the world. For, as he says, "God is not thought at all, until we gain that positive conception which ensures his differentiation from the world."⁵ Now in this very differentiation there comes into view the world itself, which Ritschl conceives as created by God and as differentiated within itself.⁶ It is a system of causes and effects. "We must conclude," he says, "that God creates in time the multiplicity of things, which, as superior or inferior to each other, become causes and effects."⁷ The differ-

¹ Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III., p. 16.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 24, 208, 228, 621.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 223, 502.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 272.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 275.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 299.

entiation within the world takes place along the line of the organic and the inorganic. "Within this whole realm of existence," to quote him again, "which is interpretable by the category of causality, observation reveals to us the narrower realm of organisms, which cannot be exhaustively explained by the laws of mechanism, but demand, besides, the application of the idea of end. But among organic beings, again, one section, differentiated in manifold ways, is animate, that is, endowed with the capacity of free movement. Finally, a still smaller section of animate beings is so constituted as to act freely from the conception of ends, to discover the laws of things, to conceive things as a whole, and themselves as in ordered interaction with them, further to identify all these activities with their own Ego by means of the manifold affections of feeling, and to exchange their spiritual possessions with others through speech and action."¹ This, of course, points to his thought of man. "Men are spiritual beings"² created by God "in his own image,"³ "akin to God,"⁴ designed "for fellowship with God,"⁵ and worth more individually than the whole world.⁶ But this matter need not be given more in detail. Suffice it to say that these three points Ritschl definitely conceived and continually referred to them as distinct, each from the others, throughout his work.

There is, further, right here a completing thought to his general scheme, viz., the "Kingdom of God." He insists that God has a correlative. But "neither the indeterminate notion of a cosmos, nor the notion of the natural world, can be conceived as the correlative of . . . the Divine will; for in them there is nothing akin to God."⁷ But while the world cannot be that correlative, and while the world as such is simply designed as a means to a particular end, "we find an object that corresponds to His nature

¹ Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III., p. 209.

² *Ibid.*, p. 282.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 502, 520, 611.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 278.

... in one or many personal beings.”¹ These individuals grouped together with moral development as their goal² constitute the Kingdom of God, the object of his divine love, and their, as well as his, true end. “Every religion is found, on closer examination, to consist in the striving after ‘goods,’ or a *summum bonum*.”³ In the Christian religion the Kingdom of God is that *summum bonum*.

Another point in Ritschl's general conception of God is in regard to His oneness. “The assertion,” he says, “that the religious view of the world is founded upon the idea of a whole certainly holds true of Christianity.”⁴ “But,” he continues, “in order to know the world as a totality, and in order” for a man “to know a totality in or over it by the help of God, he needs the idea of the oneness of God, and of the consummation of the world in an end which is for man knowable and realizable. This condition is fulfilled in Christianity alone.” In this way he differentiates from polytheism and gets monotheism which is an element in his definition of Christianity.⁵ In the same way he indicates that a religion and especially Christianity is seeking unity in the variety of phenomena presented in the world, that unity which science seeks, but he maintains that it is attained only in Christianity where there is given this conception of the oneness of God.

To summarize Ritschl's thought thus far, it is enough to notice that it consists in outline of a duality between matter and spirit. God is spirit, a unitary Being who created the world which is a complex of causes and effects, and at the same time clearly differentiated from himself. In the world, but differentiated from it, are spiritual beings, men, akin to God, and associated in the kingdom with a view to their moral development, the fulfilment of his and their real purpose.

It is thus seen that fundamentally for Ritschl God is spirit. This would be quite distinctly a metaphysical determination of

¹ Ritschl: “Recht. u. Ver.,” Eng., III., p. 278.

² *Ibid.*, p. 280.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 199.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

Him, but it is not the metaphysical that Ritschl is interested in, at least so far as his chief work "Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung" is concerned. "We are interested," he says, "in the doctrine of God only in so far as it forms a general presupposition which makes reconciliation possible."¹ This thought thus expressed becomes the guiding thread in considering the attributes which he predicates of God.

The first attribute in logical sequence is personality. Love is first when emphasis is regarded, but it is the logic that is sought here. God is a Person. Ritschl maintains that "the full conception of God as a Person is the fundamental truth in theology, — the Being who establishes the Kingdom of God as the final end of the world, and in it assures to every one who trusts in Him supremacy over the world."² "Such a conception," he further remarks in the same connection, "is to be differentiated from limitless being, regarded as the substance of the universe, from the idea of a First Cause which need not be personal, and from the self-conscious but self-enclosed Final End of the world." "The conceivability of this personality of God," he declares, "is to be reached through the study of what is so worthy of esteem among men, — independent personality."³

"The personality of a man is more developed the greater the compass of his knowledge, the more susceptible his feeling to diverse impressions, the stronger his will in the capacity to change the forms of things and to rule other persons. It is conditioned, however, by the natural endowments of the individual. The development of personality from this foundation, . . . always issues in that peculiar cast of character which proves the original endowment of each to have been different from that of all others. A person's peculiar cast of character, however, always indicates his *acquired* difference from all other persons. . . . Acquired individuality of character is the form assumed both by the highest possible degree of receptivity to the general relations of things

¹ Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III., p. 304.

² *Ibid.*, p. 28.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 233.

and the common interests of mankind, and by the highest possible degree of spiritual influence over other men in any direction. Individuality, therefore, certainly denotes an impassible limit of human personality, for the single soul can be pervaded with the common elements of spiritual life, and the universal norms necessary for their appropriation, only when the form assumed is particular. But the fact of acquired individuality is, for that very reason, not inconsistent with the subjugation of the world by spirit, with the appropriating reception of very diverse contents into 'the self-comprising Ego,' or with the latter's operating efficaciously upon a certain portion of the world, and a more or less extensive section of human society.

"Now those objections to the personality of God which rest upon the contention that we only know personality as a product of the interaction between our Ego and the given world, or as a self-evolution of the Ego which is essentially conditioned by the stimulus of the environment, point to the fact that we are created *for* personality, and that even under the category of 'persons' we are limited, growing, mutable. But such considerations are more than balanced by the fact that an independent personality, when acquired, has open to it a range of activity beyond the sway of the above-mentioned conditions. What we have become during life, through the interaction of experience and native endowment, the Ego opposes through memory as a connected reality to all possible stimuli arising from the world. . . . Developed personal individuality consists in the power to take up the inexorable stimuli of the environment into one's plan of life, in such a way that they are incorporated in it as means under firm control, and no longer felt as obstacles to the free movement of the self." ¹

"These facts are enough to prove that the human spirit, designed as it is for personality, even though in its activity and development it is conditioned by stimuli received from things — that is, by the non-Ego — must still be supposed to exist anteriorly in its own peculiar character, if its evolution by means of these condi-

¹ Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III., p. 234.

tions is to be understood. . . . Moreover, the conscious connection between one's acquired individuality and one's fixed plan of life is limited at every moment by movements of feeling and vague ideas which form an accompaniment to the rest; and even though we know as a whole what we are and what we desire, yet the manner in which we have come to possess our nature is present to our memory only in a very defective form. From these characteristics we learn experimentally that, as persons, we are always in a state of becoming, and that this is what we are created for. But the personality of God is thinkable without contradiction just because it stands contrasted with the restraints which we find by experience imposed on our personality. As the cause of all that happens, God is affected only by such forces of influence as He has conferred upon His creatures, and as He sees transparently to be the effects of His own will. Nothing which affects the Divine Spirit is originally alien to Him; and there is nothing which, in order to be self-dependent, He must first appropriate. Everything, rather, that the world means for Him is at bottom an expression of His own self-activity; and whatever of the movement of things reacts upon Him, He recognizes as the recurrent sweep of that reality which is possible through Himself alone."¹ In many other places he emphasizes this thought of God's personality, but nothing more really needs to be added.

The conception, also, of God as a particular individual Ritschl lays stress upon. "It cannot be doubted," he says, "as a historical fact, that individuality [*Besonderheit*] is everywhere a characteristic of the religious idea of God. . . . If this conception of individuality is inapplicable to God, then God cannot be distinguished from things, nor things from God. Either everything is God, or everything is world. Either the distinction of things from one another and from the universal substance is a delusion, or it is a self-deception to assume the existence of an in-

¹ Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III., p. 235. Cf. pp. 228, 232, 233, 237, 254. The quotations are quite extended, but it seemed advisable to make them so, in order to show, in as few words as possible, just what Ritschl's thought of personality was and how he conceived it in God.

telligent Creator of the world which is distinct from Him, and differentiated within itself. But this latter assumption was found necessary to explain the world, differentiated as it is into nature and spiritual life, with this further circumstance, that men regard their common moral life as the final end of the world. To eliminate individuality from the conception of God, therefore, is wrong, for it leads to absurd conclusions."¹

A nearer, and for Ritschl, much more important characterization of God, is that He is Father. Almost innumerable are the places in which the term "Father" is used.² But still more important is the *kind* of "Father" Ritschl conceived Him to be. There are all sorts of fathers, — harsh, indifferent, cold, cruel, — but Ritschl added the quality of love. He discusses this in connection with will. "God's will, like any other force, can be thought as the cause of effects only when acting in a definite direction. As Will, God can be thought only as in conscious relation to the end which He Himself is. Nevertheless, this formal truth is inadequate to explain anything which is not God; it is inadequate, therefore, to explain the world. Unless it can be shown that, and how, the world is embraced in the personal end which God sets before Himself, then even this analysis of the Divine Will leads to nothing. . . . Indeterminate Will is incapable of explaining anything.

"The word 'love' is frequently used to denote the feeling of the worth of an object for the Self. But as such feeling always sets the will in motion, either to appropriate the loved object or to enrich its existence, ordinary usage comprises these kinds of movement of the will also under the designation of love. . . . Love, as feeling, fulfills its nature when it excites the will; and love, as will, includes the feeling of the same name. . . . Love is will aiming either at the appropriation of an object or at the enrichment of its existence, because moved by a feeling of its worth. But this definition needs to be supplemented by special qualifications. First, it is necessary that the objects which are

¹ Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III., p. 274.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 93, 95, 106, 139, 182, 273, 537, 542, 561, 575.

loved should be of like nature to the subject which loves, namely, persons. When we speak of love for things or animals, the conception is degraded beneath its proper meaning. Secondly, love implies a will that is constant in its aim. If the objects change, we may have fancies, but we cannot love. Thirdly, love aims at the promotion of the other's personal end, whether known or conjectured. To render assistance in ordinary matters does not require love, but only good-feeling, a less definite thing. . . . What love does is rather to estimate every thing which concerns the other, by its bearing on the character in which the loved one is precious to the lover. . . . Love desires either to promote, to maintain, and through sympathetic interest to enjoy the individuality of character acquired by the other, or to assist him in securing those blessings which are necessary to ensure the attainment of his personal ideal. Fourthly, if love is to be a constant attitude of the will, and if the appropriation and the promotion of the other's personal end are not alternately to diverge, but to coincide in each act, then the will of the lover must take up the other's personal end and make it part of his own. That is, love continually strives to develop and to appropriate the individual self-end of the other personality, regarding this as a taste necessary to the very nature of its own personal end, its own conscious individuality. . . . This conception of love may without difficulty be tested by being applied to all sub-species of love, such as friendship, conjugal affection, parental¹ affection, and love for one's parents."²

This love, as here described, is the permanent attitude of God toward men, and constitutes the very nerve of Ritschl's conception of God. The other matters touched upon are largely simply framework. They are the implications or presuppositions, but love itself is central. Indeed he goes so far as to say that we conceive

¹ In the authorized translation of Ritschl's "Recht. u. Ver." this word appears as "paternal." The German is, "Liebe zu den Kindern." The change has been made since it comes nearer the original.

² Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver." Eng., III., pp. 276-278. Again the quotations are extended but it seemed desirable, since the thought of love is so central in Ritschl's conception of God.

God as love, "loving will," or else we do not conceive Him at all.¹ He also says: "The love of God is already intent upon men, in so far as His aim is to elevate them to the Kingdom of God, even though at the time their will may not actually be directed to the highest moral end. For love ever aims first of all at the possible ideal of another's self-end, and its proper strength resides in the other's improvement and education."² To quote him again: "It is only when the love of God, regarded as Father, is conceived as the will which works toward the destined end, that the real equivalence of forgiveness and justification, which is represented in the religious conception of things, can be made good."³ But passages need not be multiplied. The term "love" appears on almost every page, and there can be no mistaking the emphasis Ritschl lays upon this in his conception of God.

The idea of God as Moral Governor of the world Ritschl touches upon in connection with his discussion of human development preceding the Kingdom of God. It is his idea that the kingdom began with Christ, but such a thought of course immediately starts the question as to the condition of humanity preceding the inauguration of that kingdom. "The question just now is," he says, "whether the knowledge we have, that the Kingdom of God as grounded in the Divine love is the final end of the world, throws any light on the character of the existence which the nations led up to the entrance of Christianity into history, and which even Christian nations lead so far as we can abstract from their belonging to the Kingdom of God. For if the moral association of nations in the Kingdom is the end which God is pursuing in the world, then the inference is unavoidable, that the previous history of the nations must have stood in some teleological relation to that higher stage of development, and in some positive degree prepared the way for its advent, and that a simi-

¹ Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III., p. 283.

² *Ibid.*, p. 320.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 94. Cf. pp. 93, 95, 108, 273, 274.

lar order of things must obtain also in every Christian nation as a precondition of its Christianity.”¹ After dwelling upon this matter at length, he says, “The question which has given rise to this discussion was whether, from the interrelations between the love of God and the kingdom of God, there results such a moral order that it prepares the way for the Kingdom of God among men. Our conclusion, that law and the State in general are preconditions of the Kingdom of God, is of a form different from that of the sketches of a world-order which we owe to the orthodox and the Socinians. What they attempt is to furnish information in regard to the individual’s original relation to God, and the principles which God follows in His treatment of him. The theory put forward here to determine generally the relation between law and the Divine Kingdom has nothing to say to this interest in the fate of the individual. Yet it harmonizes with the conception of an education which places men under special institutions, in order to render them capable of the free appropriation of the most universal principle of life. This is what is meant by saying that the reciprocity of private rights and the obligations which bind men to civil society have both to be impressed on the mind before we can order our behaviour to those farthest off, as well as to those who are nearest, by the motive of love.”² In another section is the statement, “In the Christian view of the world, God is conceived as the Author and the active Representative of the moral law, because the final end which he desires to realize in the world must be realized just through the human race, and because the moral law represents the system of ends which are the means to the common final ends.”³

As thus far outlined, Ritschl conceived of God as a spiritual Being, personal, individual, really a loving Father, the Author of the moral law. This is the real backbone of his thought. There are, however, other characterizations that he adds, some of which have been touched upon incidentally.

¹ Ritschl : “Recht. u. Ver.,” Eng., III., p. 304.

² *Ibid.*, III., p. 317.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

God Ritschl conceived as Creator of both the world and man;¹ as having a will, though he qualified that with the term² "love"; as First Cause and Final End;³ as Founder and Ruler of his Kingdom;⁴ as good;⁵ as eternal, since he "comprises all that happens in the unity of His judgment and the unity of His purpose";⁶ as supramundane;⁷ as expressed in the Trinity. "The name of God," he asserts, "has the same sense when used of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. For the name denotes God in so far as He reveals Himself, while the Holy Spirit is the power of God which enables the community to appropriate His self-revelation as Father through His Son. That the revelation of God through his Son, however, embraces the community which acknowledges His Son as her Lord, and how it does so, is explained by saying that God manifests Himself to the Son and to the community as loving Will."⁸ He also thinks of emotions in God as well as intellect and will. "There can be no doubt whatever," he says, "that a very imperfect view was taken of God's spiritual personality in the older theology, when the functions of knowing and willing alone were employed to illustrate it. Religious thought plainly ascribes to God affections of feeling as well. The older theology, however, labored under the impression that feeling and emotion were characteristic only of limited and created personality; it transformed, *e. g.*, the religious idea of the Divine blessedness into eternal self-knowledge, and that of the Divine wrath into the fixed purpose to punish sin. The revolt against this, which finds vent in Schoeberlein's analysis of the Divine emotions, is on the whole fully justified. But it seems to me imperative to proceed very cautiously in this respect."⁹ God also

¹ Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III., pp. 202, 275, 282, 299, 300 and elsewhere.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 80, 241, 273, 274, 275.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 215.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 273.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 236.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 281, 483

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 273.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 322.

seeks to realize his glory. "God is love inasmuch as He reveals Himself through His Son to the community, which He has founded, in order to form it into the Kingdom of God, so that in designing for men this supramundane destiny, He realizes His own glory, or the fulfilment of His personal end."¹ It also seems to be Ritschl's thought that God is "Being" as set over against men who are in a state of "Becoming." "From these characteristics we learn experimentally," he declares, "that, as persons, we are always in a state of becoming, and that this is what we are created for. But the personality of God is thinkable without contradiction just because it stands contrasted with the restraints which we find by experience imposed on our personality."² Again, "God is either conceived as love, or simply not at all. If anyone thinks it necessary, after the analogy of human personality, to conceive God first as infinite Being, or as indeterminant Will, or as quiescent character, which may advance within itself to self-determination as love, what he conceives under these prefatory ideas is simply not God. For they mean something that *becomes*. But God is conceived as loving Will, when we regard His Will as set upon the forth-bringing of His Son and the community of the Kingdom of God; and if we abstract from that, what we conceive is not God at all."³ From these two passages one may not say definitely that Ritschl thought of God as Being. He rather avoids that issue, but it is quite plain that he conceives men in their personality as becoming, and thinks of God as contrasted with them, so that one cannot be far wrong in believing that the concept of "Being" attached itself to Ritschl's idea of God. It may also be added that Ritschl speaks of God in the simplest and most natural fashion all through his works. He refers to God in much the same way as Bible writers always did and as is quite common in distinctively religious circles to-day.

To conclude this section, Ritschl's own words may be quoted to the effect that "the idea of God is the ideal bond between a defi-

¹ Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III., p. 282.

² *Ibid.*, p. 236.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 282.

nite view of the world and the idea of man as constituted for the attainment of goods or the highest good.”¹

But how about the real existence of such a Being, characterized as Ritschl thus characterizes him? In answering this question Ritschl follows out another line of thought that is quite fundamental with him.

There is a distinction, he maintains, between religious and theoretical or philosophical knowledge. The two have often been in conflict, and this conflict was possible because there was the one object of contemplation, viz., the world. This has shown itself very clearly in Christianity. Philosophy in the western world has had the ambition “to comprehend the universe under one supreme law,” and Christianity also has conceived of one law “under which the world is comprehensible as a whole under God.” To resolve this difficulty, Ritschl calls to his aid “value-judgments.” Sensations are appropriated by the mind in a two-fold way. “They are determined, according to their value for the Ego, by the feeling of pleasure or pain. Feeling is the basal function of mind, inasmuch as in it the Ego is originally present to itself. In the feeling of pleasure or pain the Ego decides whether a sensation, which touches the feeling of self, serves to heighten or depress it. On the other hand, through an idea the sensation is judged in respect of its cause, the nature of the latter, and its connection with other causes; and by means of observations, etc., the knowledge of things thus gained is extended until it becomes scientific.” From these two functions of spirit which are always in operation simultaneously result the value-judgments which are “determinative in the case of all connected knowledge of the world, even when carried out in the most objective fashion. Attention during scientific observation, and the impartial examination of the matter observed, always denote that such knowledge has a value for him who employs it. This fact makes its presence all the more distinctly felt when knowledge is guided through a richly diversified field by attention of a technical or practical kind.” These value judgments he divides into two groups, the *concomitant* and the *independent*. “The former are operative and

¹ Ritschl: “Recht. u. Ver.,” Eng., III., p. 201.

necessary in all theoretical cognition," the latter are "perceptions of moral ends or moral hindrances, in so far as they excite moral pleasure or pain, or, it may be, set in motion the will to appropriate what is good or repel the opposite." Now religious knowledge forms a separate class of independent value-judgments. "That is, it cannot be traced back to the conditions which mark the knowledge belonging to moral will, for there exists religion which goes on without any relation whatever to the moral conduct of life. . . . For only at the higher stages do we find religion combined with the ethical conduct of life. Religious knowledge moves in independent value-judgments, which relate to man's attitude to the world, and call forth feelings of pleasure or pain, in which man either enjoys the dominion over the world vouchsafed him by God, or feels grievously the lack of God's help to that end. . . . The peculiar nature of religious value-judgments is less clear in the case of religions of an explicitly ethical character. Nevertheless, in Christianity we can distinguish between the religious functions which relate to our attitude towards God and the world, and the moral functions which point directly to men, and only indirectly to God, Whose end in the World we fulfil by moral service in the Kingdom of God. In Christianity, the religious motive of ethical action lies here, that the Kingdom of God, which it is our task to realize, represents also the highest good which God destines for us as our supramundane goal. For here there emerges the value-judgment that our blessedness consists in that elevation above the world in the Kingdom of God which accords with our true destiny."¹

Now the religious man, and in particular the Christian, feels himself set over against the world, and conceives that it is his task to raise himself to a position of superiority over the world. But he also becomes painfully conscious of his own inability to achieve that end. Consequently the idea of God as One who will assist him becomes for him a value-judgment, and, indeed, a religious value-judgment.²

¹ Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III., pp. 203-206. The quotations are taken here and there from these pages.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 17, 503.

But how does all this get at the real existence of God? one is inclined to ask. It doesn't. Religion simply assumes. "In every religion," says Ritschl, "the thought of God is given."¹ "For religious cognition the existence of God is beyond question, for the activity of God becomes to us a matter of conviction through the attitude we take up to the world as religious men."² "In religious cognition," he again says, "the idea of God is dependent on the presupposition that man opposes himself to the world of nature, and secures his position, in or over it, by faith in God."³ Other similar passages abound.

From this it is quite evident that Ritschl leans towards Kant's moral argument. The other time-honored arguments he discusses and to them allows a certain worth. "The import of the cosmological and teleological arguments is that, at the stage of the interpretation of the system of things given by metaphysics, when things are not yet differentiated as nature and spirit, disinterested science, *if it is to comprehend the world as a whole*, is led to conceptions of God which coincide with the Christian idea of Him."⁴ These two arguments are "not coördinate, but, as Duns Scotus says, are so related to one another that they must be supplemented by a third, viz., the Anselmic. But even when so arranged it is not difficult to see that they fail to prove the *objective existence* of God as contrasted with his existence in thought, that they fail to prove the existence of God, and that they cannot be constructed save in dependence on the very presupposition which distinguishes the Christian view of the world."⁵ He adds, however, "that these attempted proofs may be regarded collectively as evidence of the striving after the true solution."⁶

Turning to Kant's argument Ritschl says, "No proof of God's existence starts properly save that which accepts as given man's self-distinction from nature, and his endeavors to maintain himself

¹ Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III., p. 17.

² *Ibid.*, p. 318.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 219.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 215.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 214.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

against it or over it. This condition is satisfied in the case of the so-called moral argument, stated by Kant in his Critique of Judgment."¹ He maintains that "there can be no doubt that Kant is in agreement with the Christian idea of God in his description of the Moral Creator and Ruler of the world."² He further states Kant's position very fairly. To quote him again, "He [Kant] insists that the necessity of the thought of God can be adequately demonstrated solely for the practical Reason, for the idea of final end itself is rooted solely in the use of freedom according to moral laws, and does not arise out of the investigation of nature, and thus possesses only subjectivo-practical reality. . . . We lack the material for the idea of a supersensuous being; and therefore it is impossible to determine such an idea specifically, and employ it as a basis of explanation. . . . The idea of God [according to Kant] is solely a conviction of personal faith, *i. e.*, necessarily to be conceived as standing in relation to the dutiful use of the practical Reason."³

But while Ritschl is thus in sympathy with Kant and his moral argument in the main, he does not altogether agree with him. For as he says, Kant had not the least desire to prove "the reality of God as an object of theoretical cognition. Even when he declares that he has proved the reality of a supreme Moral Legislator, who is also Creator of the world, yet the limitation of this proof 'to the merely practical use of our reason' simply means that for religious knowledge the reality of God is self-evident. But this limitation hangs together with his separation of the spheres of the theoretical and practical Reason, in which Kant failed to estimate the practical Reason at its proper value. If the exertion of moral will is a reality, then the practical Reason is a branch of theoretical cognition. These two positions Kant never reached. The reason of this failure lies in the fact that with him sensibility is the characteristic mark of reality. Therefore, too, he declares the conception of God to be theoretically impos-

¹ Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III., p. 219.

² *Ibid.*, p. 219.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 220.

sible,¹ and abandons it to the practical Reason.”² From this point Ritschl proceeds to outline his own thought, which, as he thinks, supplements Kant's.

“If it is at all possible,” he begins, “to give a proof, first of all, of the scientific validity of the conception of God, which shall not be merely an utterance of the religious consciousness reflecting on its own contents, it can be done only by the proper delimitation of that sphere of experience which nothing save the religious conception of God can adequately explain. What I mean by this is that, besides the reality of nature, theoretical knowledge must recognize as given the reality of spiritual life, and the equal binding force of the special laws which obtain in each realm. . . . Knowledge of the laws of our action is theoretical knowledge, for it is knowledge of the laws of spiritual life. Now the impulses of knowledge, of feeling, and of æsthetic intuition, of will in general and in its special application to society, and finally the impulse of religion in the general sense of the word, all concur to demonstrate that spiritual life is the end, while nature is the means. . . . It is the task of cognition to seek for a law explaining the coexistence of these two heterogeneous orders of reality, viz., nature and religious life. . . . Religion is the practical law of the spirit, in accordance with which it sustains its fundamental character as an end-in-itself against the restrictions it suffers from nature. This practical law attains its complete development in Christianity, for Christianity lays down the principle that personal life is to be prized above the whole world of nature, . . . and consequently repudiates that intermixture of nature and spirit by maintaining which the heathen religions betray their comparative failure. For in the Christian religion the soul gains the assurance of its peculiar value as a totality through the consciousness of blessedness—a consciousness conditioned by the idea of the purely spiritual God, who as Creator of the universe governs all things on the principle that mankind are ordained to be the final end of the world, through trust in God and as mem-

¹ German word “Unvollziehbar.”

² Ritschl : “Recht. u. Ver.,” Eng., III., p. 221.

bers of His spiritual kingdom. Now we must either resign the attempt to comprehend the ground and law of the coexistence of nature and spiritual life, or we must, to attain our end, acknowledge the Christian conception of God as the truth by which our knowledge of the universe is consummated. In the former case, science would disobey the impulse to complete itself which arises from the perception of the fact that nature is knowable and is known only because it exists for spirit. Such a renunciation of the systematic completion of theoretical knowledge would not impair the practical validity of religious faith in God in the Christian sense. But still, as all cognition of nature is subject to the precondition described above, knowledge has laid on it the task of comprehending the coexistence of nature and spiritual life. If so, however, nothing remains but to accept the Christian idea of God, and that, too, as an indispensable truth, in order that we may find both the ground and the law of the real world in that Creative Will which includes, as the final end of the world, the destination of mankind for the Kingdom of God.”¹

Having thus criticized Kant in part, and in part supplemented him, Ritschl returns to all the arguments and gives a brief summary somewhat as follows: “The meaning of this moral argument for the necessity of the thought of God, differs altogether from the aim of the other arguments; and for that reason the success it attains surpasses that of the others. The cosmological and teleological arguments are intended to show that the conception of God — necessary to complete the circle of knowledge — is similar in kind to the results of science. A truth which for religious faith is certain is thus proved, it is held, to be at the same time the result of scientific cognition as it advances from observation to observation and crystallizes into conclusions, and should be set up as the criterion of theological science. But this method ends in failure, partly because neither argument takes us beyond the limits of the world, partly because their pretended results, even if they were correct, differ from the Christian conception of God in this, that they fail to express His worth for men. . . . On the

¹ Ritschl: “Recht. u. Ver.” Eng., III., pp. 222-224.

other hand, while Kant regards practical faith in God conceived as endowed with the attributes which Christianity ascribes to Him, as necessary to complete our knowledge of the world, yet he does not posit this idea — which is an object merely of practical faith, and cannot be proved apart from such faith — as a conception which is theoretical or rational in the sense of general science. On the contrary, he maintains it in its original and specific character. Now it is the duty of theology to conserve the special characteristic of the conception of God, namely, that it can only be represented in value-judgments. Consequently it ought to base its claim to be a science, when looked at in itself, on the use of the method described above,¹ and, when looked at in its relation to other sciences, by urging that, as Kant was the first to show, the Christian view of God and the world enables us comprehensively to unify our knowledge of nature and the spiritual life of man in a way which otherwise is impossible.”²

Enough has been said here, it would seem, to indicate that Ritschl does not give any real proof at all, but as already indicated he takes the thought of God as given in the religious life. The thought of God is necessary, he maintains, but the real existence of God is not proved, but assumed.

¹ Cf. pp. 85 and 86 of this chapter.

² Ritschl: “*Recht. u. Ver.*,” Eng., III., p. 225.

CHAPTER V.

SOURCES OF RITSCHL'S CONCEPTION OF GOD.

It is not without advantage that the conceptions of God entertained by Kant and Luther have been investigated as preliminary to a study of Ritschl's conception. The resemblances between the last and the two earlier ones are evident even when they are but hastily compared. It is the purpose of the present chapter to point out those resemblances somewhat in detail, and to indicate, so far as possible, to which of these earlier writers Ritschl was most deeply indebted.

The resemblances between Ritschl's conception and Luther's as outlined in chapter one is very striking, and yet also striking are its resemblances to what may easily be gathered from the Bible, especially from the New Testament. There can be no question that Ritschl drew largely from this latter source. As he himself says: "Theology, which has to set forth the authentic content of the Christian religion in a positive form, has to construct it out of the books of the New Testament and from no other source."¹ Still further, holding as he did that knowledge of God comes in its completest form through the revelation in Christ,² he could not have failed to make use of that material in constructing his concept of God. In fact he lays emphasis right here and quotes from the Gospel of John and the Epistles of John and other sections of the New Testament in different places in the development of his idea of God. But other influences led to his giving that concept the particular form which it bears. "Theology stands in the service of the Church," to quote him again, "and under present conditions it is possible only in a particular church, consequently the theologian, while he presents the material of his thought only out of the New Testament, stands also under the

¹ Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," Vol. II., p. 18.

² *Ibid.*, Eng., III., pp. 203, 207, and many other passages.

direction of the church system of teaching.”¹ He does not mean by this, however, that the thought of the New Testament should be twisted to meet the theological tenets. He rather means that the two should be compared and a harmony, so nearly as possible, effected. If the church teaching has become divergent from the real thought of the New Testament, then it should be brought into conformity, and if, on the other hand, larger knowledge of the New Testament makes necessary a change in the particular form of the church teaching, then that modification should be made so that the two may be in harmony. This he declares is specially needed in Protestant Germany “since for a long time the full harmony between the church teaching and the Bible has been rather frail.”² He further says: “For the construction of a theological system out of the New Testament material, the normal teaching of the Lutheran church offers a peculiar criterion. That makes it necessary to derive theology from the Bible, so far as it, as Luther said, presents Christ.”³ Not everything, therefore, found in the Bible, nor yet indeed in the New Testament will constitute the material for a theological system, but just that which conforms to this norm. In this way he sees that it is possible to guard against a mere Biblical theology, and also against many views that have been unfruitful in the history of the Church as a whole.

It is clear, therefore, that Ritschl did not construct his concept of God from the Bible *de novo*, nor did he neglect the material there. He rather took that material and gave it a form which made it harmonize with what was best in his own traditional church teaching. He was guided by the norm Luther gave. Consequently the resemblance between his conception of God and Luther's is not superficial, nor is it a matter of chance. Ritschl worked consciously under the influence of the great German Reformer.

This connection between Ritschl and Luther is made evident from several passages. “The close affinity between Humanism

¹ Ritschl: “Recht. u. Ver.,” Vol. II., p. 18.

² *Ibid.*, p. 18.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

and Scholasticism," he declares, "betrays itself here, but Melancthon abandons the task of constructing theology according to Luther's principle. That task I essay in the full consciousness that my action is justified and rendered imperative by the standard writings of the Reformation."¹ Again, to quote him, "I maintain the religious conception of God as conditioned in the way Luther describes,"² and again, "The content of the Divine will is to be deduced from the revealed reciprocal relations between Christ and God, and from no other principle. Thus a full elucidation is given of the starting-point of theology, as fixed by Luther."³ Statements could hardly be stronger than these. They indicate with great clearness Ritschl's own conscious dependence upon Luther in constructing his concept of God.

What Luther's conception of God was, has already been pointed out in Chapter I. In the background of his mind was the idea of God as a Judge. Luther stood in terror of him. It was just this aspect of God that occasioned the anxiety and fear that so oppressed him in his early monastic life before the newer conception came. And ever after when Luther thought of God at all as a Judge, or let his mind dwell upon his wrath, the old terrors returned.⁴ But the conception at which he arrived and which became revolutionary in his life was of God as a loving Father revealed in Christ. If a distinction be made, as is really necessary, within the field of Luther's thought about God, then just those elements that had to do with God as loving, kind, merciful, gracious, forgiving, — a real, personal, loving Father — constitute what may be denominated his distinctive religious conception. And it was just this that Ritschl emphasized.⁵ And just as the line between God and Christ frequently seemed to disappear in Luther's utterances, just as he seemed at times to use the two terms interchangeably, so does that line frequently vanish in Ritschl's use. As indicated, Ritschl was a dualist. He thought

¹ Ritschl : "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III., p. 7.

² *Ibid.*, p. 212.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 237.

⁴ Köstlin : "The Theology of Luther," Vol. II., p. 208.

⁵ Cf. Chapter IV., p. 79.

of the two realities, matter and spirit, the immediate objects of cognition. But also, following the "First Philosophy" of Aristotle, he conceived of an ideal unity, a first somewhat from which both flowed. But this did not constitute the Christian conception of God upon which he laid emphasis. When he discusses the cosmological and teleological arguments, as already pointed out,¹ he indicates a kinship between that abstract thought of the Greeks in their attempt "to comprehend the world as a whole" and the Christian effort also to see things whole. But Ritschl's conception has greater intension, and it is by reason of this intension that it becomes differentiated from the Greek. And this intension comes through Christ, is Ritschl's thought. To be sure there is the conception of God as First Cause, Creator, and Preserver. His existence is not proved, but simply assumed. In Christ however, there is a revelation of that God which constitutes knowledge of him obtained in no other way. Because, therefore, of the qualities Ritschl perceived in Christ, qualities which he believed to be of God, he used forms of expression similar to those Luther used. God and Christ became interchangeable. He speaks of God as the "Founder of the Kingdom of God,"² and of the "Son of God" as "its Founder,"³ and again he speaks of Christ as "Redeemer and Founder of the Kingdom of God."⁴ In the emphasis which he thus lays upon Christ as a revelation of God, and the way in which he practically identifies the two he bears a most striking resemblance to Luther.

It was also a religious problem that Ritschl sought to solve. The title of his chief distinctively theological work "*Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*" is in itself suggestive. In the preface of the first volume of this work he says that for thirty years, indeed, since the third semester of his university course he had placed definitely before himself the task of completely understanding the Christian idea of reconciliation. This same volume gives a

¹ Cf. Chapter IV., p. 87.

² Ritschl: "*Recht. u. Ver.*," Eng., III., p. 92.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 468.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

discussion of the development of that doctrine from the earliest part of the Christian era until the present. The significant point here is that after this complete survey of the field he definitely picked out Luther's conception of justification and reconciliation and made that basal in his own work. He does, indeed, compare Luther's view with Zwingli's and Calvin's, but the test is usually a religious test, and in the main the emphasis is with Luther. He modifies Luther's view in some respects, but does not depart from it fundamentally. He limits its application, rather than its idea.

In regard to this matter of "justification" he says, "justification or reconciliation is the fundamental principle of Christianity as a religion,"¹ and repeats that view in many other places. This "justification or reconciliation" he defines as denoting "the status before God into which sinners are brought through the mediation of Christ within His community. We belong to God as a child does to his father."² Again he declares, "Justification, or the reception of sinners into the relation of children of God must be referred to God under the attribute of Father."³ In summarizing his own discussion of the subject Ritschl says, that he has used "materials drawn partly from the dogmatic theologians of the classical period, partly from the Reformers and the Lutheran symbols. . . . But on the whole," he continues, "the doctrine of justification set forth in these three chapters stands in the line of direct continuity with the intention of the Reformers and the standards of the Lutheran Church." . . . And finally he says, "Personal assurance, springing from justification, is experienced in and through trust in God in all the situations of life, and especially in patience, by him who through his faith in Christ incorporates himself into the community of believers."⁴ Assurance was the thing Luther sought, and he found it through faith in the forgiving love of God as revealed in Christ.

¹ Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III., p. 120.

² *Ibid.*, p. 140.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 191.

Now the point to be emphasized right here is that since Ritschl's problem was identical with Luther's, and that, too, a religious one, and since he solved that problem in conscious dependence upon Luther, his concept of God must have been very similar. A diametrically opposed conception would not have answered. And further, expressions which Ritschl continually makes use of when referring to God are almost identical with Luther's.¹ Consequently the conclusion cannot be avoided that there was a very close relationship between the two views of God.

Ritschl also maintained that Luther's attitude toward God was much the same as his own. "In Schultz's treatise," he says, "reference is made to the fact that Luther admits no 'disinterested' knowledge of God, but recognizes as a religious datum only such knowledge of Him as takes the form of unconditional trust."² This is practically Ritschl's own position. As already pointed out Ritschl refers all science as well as religion to interest, to value-judgments.³ And further, to follow his own statement, "That religious knowledge consists of value-judgments is brought out in a felicitous way by Luther in his Larger Catechism, in the explanation of the First Commandment. 'God is that Being, by reason of whose goodness and power you may certainly promise yourself all good things, and to whom you may go for refuge in whatever adverse circumstances may arise or dangers impend. So that to have God is nothing else than to trust and believe him with your whole heart. . . . These two, faith and God, must be united with one tie.' In these sentences are expressed various truths of which the theology of the schools both earlier and later has taken no account, and which its modern successors combat even yet."⁴ But Ritschl himself sought to place just these truths in the forefront of Christian theology. They are the heart of Luther's concept of God, and in championing them Ritschl could not have had a different view. The two must have been substantially the same.

¹ Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III., pp. 212, 226, 238, 380 and elsewhere.

² *Ibid.*, p. 6.

³ Chapter IV., pp. 85-87.

⁴ Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III., p. 211.

Kant, also, exercised an important influence upon Ritschl, which is evident in his work as a whole. His use of the terms "synthetic" and "analytic,"¹ "regulative" and "constitutive,"² "form" and "content,"³ "categorical imperative,"⁴ "heteronomy,"⁵ — these all indicate a Kantian influence direct or indirect. As already shown, he also was acquainted with Kant's moral argument for the existence of God, and for his conception of the Kingdom of God he gives credit to Kant by saying that he "was the first to perceive the supreme importance for ethics of the 'Kingdom of God' as an association of men bound together by the laws of virtue,"⁶ though he goes on to say that "it remained for Schleiermacher first to employ the true conception of the teleological nature of the Kingdom of God to determine the idea of Christianity." Again he speaks of our owing "our ethical standpoint to Kant"⁷ and connects him also with the idea of reconciliation in the following way: "The high significance which attaches to Kant for the understanding of the Christian idea of reconciliation, is not so much expressed in a positive contribution of teaching, as that it consists rather in this, that he firmly fixed the universally valuable presuppositions of the thought of reconciliation in the consciousness of ethical freedom and ethical guilt in a critical, that is, scientifically necessary way."⁸ He further speaks of him as having "renewed the moral world-view of the Reformation,"⁹ and notes his service toward "answering the religious-moral question around which the Aufklärung turned, . . . in that Kant intensified the consciousness of personal guilt through his conception of the absolute moral law."¹⁰ The influence and ap-

¹ Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III., pp. 81, 84, 76, 90, 96, 217. Vol. I., German, pp. 295, 297, 299.

² *Ibid.*, Eng., III., p. 196.

³ *Ibid.*, Eng., III., p. 274.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Eng., III., p. 144.

⁵ *Ibid.*, I., German, p. 485.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Eng., III., p. 11.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Eng., III., p. 54.

⁸ *Ibid.*, I., German, p. 429.

⁹ *Ibid.*, I., German, p. 431.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, I., German, p. 577.

preciation of Kant are unmistakable in Ritschl's work, but the question here is, How much of Kant entered into Ritschl's idea of God?

In the first place Ritschl himself turns the problem right around. He says that Kant's idea of God was the Christian idea. After outlining Kant's thought in the third chapter of his "Religion within the Limits of Mere Reason" Ritschl says, "So far had Kant appropriated the connection of Christian ideas,"¹ and again, commenting upon Kant's "Critique of Judgment," § 87, he says, "To begin with there can be no doubt that Kant is in agreement with the Christian idea of God in his description of the Moral Creator and Ruler of the world."² This view is, in the main, in harmony with the thought outlined in chapter two of this dissertation. Kant's conception of God as there given was practically in line with the traditional view. He could predicate of God, as he conceived him, nearly everything commonly predicated, but he insisted that we do not get "Erkenntniss" of God. However, when Ritschl says that Kant in his description of God as the "Moral Creator and Ruler of the world," described practically the Christian idea of him, somewhat of caution must be exercised.

As pointed out in Chapter II.³ Kant's insistence upon the moral was the new element which he added. Not but that God had been so conceived in Biblical times, but with the schoolmen the moral element had fallen into the background. It is true, too, that Luther laid more emphasis upon the moral attributes of God than had been customary, but it may well be questioned whether God had ever been conceived before as moral in quite that sense in which Kant entertained the thought of morality. Did Ritschl mean, then, the Christian idea of God as traditionally held, or his own conception constructed as indicated in chapter four? Apparently the latter. Ritschl felt that he was framing a conception of God that should be normal in the Church, the elements of which had previously been given, and to which there had been at times approximations, but it had not previously existed in just that form.

¹ Ritschl : "Recht. u. Ver.," I., German, p. 451.

² *Ibid.*, Eng., III., p. 219.

³ Chapter II., pp. 35, 43.

Consequently in what he says of the moral in God, can be detected a Kantian element, though not a large one, for Ritschl does not emphasize that aspect.

Ritschl, in fact, rather minimizes the moral side of God. In speaking of the love of God he says, "There is no other conception of equal worth beside this which need be taken into account. This is especially true of the conception of the Divine holiness, which, in the Old Testament sense, is for various reasons not valid in Christianity, while its use in the New Testament is obscure."¹ To be sure the term holiness as used in Old Testament and New Testament times is not the same as the term moral, and yet what the Hebrews had in mind when they used that term was not altogether different from what morality means to-day. When Jesus said, "Be ye perfect as your Father which is heaven is perfect,"² he might almost as well have said "Be ye holy" since the two terms τέλειος and ἅγιος approach each other in meaning. What he meant was that they should have in themselves, in as high a degree as possible, those qualities which are perfect in God. But Ritschl was not emphasizing this. And further, the thought of righteousness approximates to a legalistic conception. Throughout the history of the Church two tendencies have been balanced over against each other, viz., the free independent religious attitude characteristic of Paul, of Augustine in the main, and of Luther in a high degree, and the legalistic attitude of James, the early Church at Jerusalem and the Roman Catholic Church as a whole. Ritschl had this in mind. He did not lay emphasis upon righteousness. As he says, "A moral order which is based upon the Hellenic juridical conception of Divine justice, and which, moreover, in virtue of our first parents' sin issues in the condemnation of the whole human race, leaves no room for the possibility of the reconciliation of man with God."³ Then further he continues, "Theology, in delineating the moral order of the world, must take as its starting-point that conception of God in which the relation

¹ Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III., p. 273.

² Matthew, 5: 48.

³ Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III., p. 262.

of God to His Son our Lord is expressed, a relation which by Christ's mediation, is extended likewise to His community. For when the Apostles, . . . describe God as our Father, that is an abbreviated expression for the Christian name for God, which when fully stated runs, 'the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.' . . . Any attempt, therefore, to construct a scientific doctrine of God must be wrong which fails to keep in view all the aspects of this name."¹ It is evident here, that not the juristic or legalistic, nor indeed the ethical comes to the front, but that the religious predominates.

It is not intended, however, to suggest here that Ritschl ignored the moral. Quite the reverse. He emphasized the moral, but not in God. He makes a clear distinction between what is religious and what is moral. The latter has a social aspect. "In Christianity," he asserts, "we can distinguish between the religious functions which relate to our attitude towards God and the world, and the moral functions which point directly to men, and only indirectly to God, whose end in the world we fulfil by moral service in the kingdom of God."² He is not interested in attributing morality to God, but is interested in men's religious relation to God and their moral relations to one another.

Consequently Kant's contribution to Ritschl's thought at this point may not be rated very high. Kant very probably did influence him here, but it was a minor point with Ritschl. All the more does this opinion seem justified because of a note he gives in his third edition. "The line of thought set forth here," he says, "has been met by the contemptuous objection that it bases Christianity upon morality. The sapient persons who thus prefer the charge that I, like Kant in his 'Religion within the Limits of Mere Reason,' make religion a subordinate appendix to morals, *though my mode of doctrine shows the very opposite*, would do better to acquire a thorough knowledge of the elementary distinction between the *ratio essendi* and the *ratio cognoscendi*, instead of

¹ Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III., p. 272.

² *Ibid.*, p. 205.

sitting in judgment on me.”¹ Had Ritschl emphasized the thought of morality in God he would have been more open to the charge, which he here repels, than he now is.

It has been indicated already that Ritschl was strongly influenced by Luther in making the thought of God as loving Father central in his work. Kant, very probably, contributed somewhat to that same end. Ritschl in many places shows familiarity with Kant's "Religion within the Limits of Mere Reason." He summarizes the third section of it in the first volume of his own work.² In that particular place Kant says, "This idea of a moral world Ruler is a task for our practical reason. There rests upon us not so much the obligation to know what God in himself is [his nature], but what he is for us as moral beings. . . . According to this need of the practical reason, the universal true religious belief is the belief in God as (1) the almighty Creator of heaven and earth, that is, the moral as holy Law-giver; belief in him (2) as the Sustainer of the human race, as kind Ruler and moral Maintainer of the same; and belief in him (3) as the Administrator of his own holy laws, as the righteous Judge."³ In the further development of this thought Kant makes this statement; "The highest goal of the moral perfection of mortal creatures, one, indeed, for men never completely attainable, is the love of the law."⁴ And then he adds, "According to this idea there would be in religion a principle of faith like this: God is love; in him a man can honor the loving Father, . . . the Son, and . . . the Holy Spirit."⁵ Aside from other thoughts that may collect here this resemblance to Ritschl is very striking. Still further, Schleiermacher touches this same proposition, "God is love," and says, "If we consider the way we have consciousness of both sorts" [of love and wisdom in God], "then we have that of the divine love immediately in the consciousness of the redemption, and since this is the ground to which we refer all other God-consciousness,

¹ Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III., p. 226.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. I., German, p. 451.

³ Kant; Rosenkranz, Vol. X., p. 167.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. X., p. 174.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. X. p. 175.

it naturally represents to us the nature of God. The divine wisdom does not come into our consciousness in so immediate a manner."¹ Consequently, it would seem that Schleiermacher laid chief emphasis upon God as love religiously. He, too, was strongly influenced by Kant, and Ritschl by both. It would seem, therefore, that a direct or indirect influence from Kant reached Ritschl in the thought of God as love. The influence was not so strong as that from Luther, and yet a real secondary influence here can hardly be doubted.

Already the use Ritschl made of Kant's moral proof for the existence of God has been pointed out, and practically nothing more need be added in this connection. That contributes nothing to the form or content. In the main Ritschl is in agreement with that argument. When he says that "in every religion the thought of God is given"² he indicates that he regards that thought as an hypothesis, a major premise, behind which he does not care to go. Christians assume God's existence, he means. They do not prove it.

Another resemblance to Kant is seen in the value-judgments of which Ritschl made so much account. More immediately this influence may have come from Lotze. Ritschl discusses three distinct kinds of Erkenntnisstheorie.³ The first he refers to Plato where the "idea is that the thing works upon us, by means of its mutable qualities, arousing our sensations and ideas, but that it is really at rest behind the qualities as a permanently self-equivalent unity of attributes. . . . The second we owe to Kant, "who limits the knowledge of the understanding to the world of phenomena, but declares unknowable the thing or things in themselves, though their interdependent changes are the ground of the changes in the world of phenomena. . . . The third is due to Lotze. He holds that in the phenomena which in a definite space exhibit changes to a limited extent and in a determinate order, we cognize the thing as the cause of its qualities operating upon us, as

¹ Schleiermacher: "Der Christliche Glaube," pp. 486, 488.

² Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III. p. 17.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

the end which these serve as means, as the law of their constant changes."¹ This theory of Lotze, Ritschl says he agrees with.² Then, too, in other matters he shows relation to Lotze. A thought that often recurs in Lotze is that "our business is not to make the world, but to understand the inner connexion of the world that is realized already."³ Ritschl says, "The world for us is a given fact,"⁴ and in his "Theologie und Metaphysik" he quotes approvingly from Lotze a passage similar to the one above. "Metaphysic has not the task to make reality, but to understand it; to investigate the inner order of what is given, not to derive the given from what is not given."⁵ Again, the influence of Lotze is clearly seen in Ritschl's discussion of the personality of God. He there refers directly to Lotze's "Microcosmos." The intimate relation of the two cannot be questioned.

Now Lotze frequently raises the question of worth. In his "Metaphysics" he makes worth one of the tests of the "fourth dimension of space,"⁶ and again says, "The wish that a story heard may be true or [in other cases] that it may not be true, arises from the *interest* which the *heart feels* in the depicted relations of the figures brought on the scene."⁷ That Ritschl should have taken this conception of value-judgments from Lotze would not be surprising. But Lotze himself was not a stranger to Kant. He indicates agreement with him on several points. Consequently it is not easy to say definitely that Ritschl obtained his value-judgments from Lotze, and even if he did so obtain them a Kantian influence might still be there, for Kant makes use of the same sort of judgments. In his "Religion within the Limits of Mere Reason" in a passage already quoted⁸ Kant says, "No obligation rests upon us to know what God is in himself [his nature],

¹ Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III., p. 18.

² *Ibid.*, p. 20.

³ Lotze: "Metaphysics," Eng., Vol. II., p. 183.

⁴ Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng. III., p. 278.

⁵ Ritschl: "Theologie u. Metaphysik," p. 40.

⁶ Lotze: "Metaphysics," Eng., Vol. I., p. 302.

⁷ Lotze: *Ibid.*, p. 153.

⁸ Chapter II., p. 34. Chapter V., p. 102.

but what he is for us as moral beings.”¹ This is very evidently a value-judgment, and one of which Ritschl makes frequent use. Again Ritschl shows familiarity with Kant’s “Critique of Judgment” as mentioned² above, and in that the matter of worth comes to the front.³ Kant also brings out the thought of worth in his “Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten.”

Because, therefore, of the relations Ritschl sustained to both Kant and Lotze, and because of the relation between Lotze and Kant, it is not clear from which he derived his conception of value-judgments. If he obtained his thought from Kant, then of course there is a direct Kantian influence in the matter; but if he gained the thought from Lotze there is still room for an indirect Kantian influence. But this does not closely touch Ritschl’s concept of God. It rather has to do with his reason for assuming such a Being.

Another resemblance between Kant and Ritschl in their thought of God is to be detected along the line of Neoplatonism. A dualism between matter and spirit lies at the bottom of Ritschl’s thought.⁴ Neoplatonism was dualistic both along the line of matter and spirit and of good and evil. Matter was evil and distinct from God, while God was spirit and good. Matter, the world, came into being as the result of a series of emanations, or through the agency of a series of intermediate beings, or the last one of such a series. It was necessary that there should be such intermediaries, or emanations, in order that the world itself, when it did appear, might be sufficiently remote from God so as not to have a corrupting influence upon him. To be sure Ritschl’s dualism may have come through Descartes, for Lotze began as a Cartesian,⁵ and since the relation between Lotze and Ritschl was intimate, as already indicated, that may have been the immediate source. But that would not have differentiated him necessarily from Neoplatonism, for while Descartes’ dualism was between soul and

¹ Kant : Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. X., p. 167.

² Chapter IV., p. 88.

³ Kant : Works, Rosenkranz, Vol. IV., p. 351.

⁴ Chapter IV., p. 72.

⁵ Höffding : “History of Modern Philosophy,” Vol. II., p. 523.

body as distinguished from the dualism between matter and form which characterized Aristotle's thought and which underlay Neoplatonism, Ritschl consciously returned to Aristotle and his dualism.¹

Again, when Ritschl insists upon the three points of reference, "God, the world, and man,"² and speaks of men as a "multitude of spirits, together forming a race, as a possible object of the Divine love,"³ he gives what, in outline at least, is quite suggestive of Neoplatonism. And right here another influence, which played upon Ritschl, may be noted. Early in his career he was a Hegelian, a follower of Baur of Tübingen.⁴ Hegel with his "Thesis," "Antithesis," and "Synthesis" which at last becomes a new "Thesis" has a framework corresponding to the Neoplatonic, for as Edward Caird says, "If the recognition of a universal principle manifested in humanity naturally led Comte to the idea of the worship of humanity, the recognition of a universal principle manifested in man and nature alike must lead to the idea of the worship of God."⁵ Here, though there is but one principle, there are the three points of reference, "man," "nature," and "God." That there is Neoplatonism in Hegel is suggested by Heinze when he says, "If a man should seek in Hegel and others, he would discover traces of the last Greek speculation."⁶ Still further, when Ritschl speaks of God's "seeking to realize his own glory"⁷ he sounds a note characteristic of Christianity as influenced by Neoplatonism.

These traces are rather slight and somewhat vague, and yet they do betray unmistakably a Neoplatonic influence. It is true that Ritschl hurled his anathemas against Neoplatonism. This is especially apparent in his "Theologie und Metaphysik." It is true, as just pointed out, that he went back consciously to

¹ Chapter IV., p. 72.

² Ritschl : "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III., p. 29.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 280.

⁴ Otto Ritschl : "Albrecht Ritschls Leben," Vol. I., p. 105.

⁵ Edward Caird : *Encyclopædia Brit.*, "Metaphysics."

⁶ Herzog : *Real-Encyclopædie*, Heinze. "Neuplatonismus."

⁷ Ritschl : "Recht. u. Ver.," Eng., III., p. 282.

Aristotle, but nevertheless he did not altogether clear his skirts of the influence that had so long pervaded the Church.

Now there is a similarity here between Ritschl and Kant and Ritschl and Luther. Luther, in large part, went back to Augustine who was more Neoplatonic in his thought than anything else. Indeed, he was the very one who fastened that form of philosophy upon the Western Church. The general outlines of Luther's thought and Ritschl's do not differ materially. Luther had more to say about the devil and his angels than Ritschl did, but aside from that section, the two were in close agreement.¹ Kant, too, in the framework of his thought, approximated to the same scheme. In his "Critique of Pure Reason," Kant's destructive work ended with the "Analytic." With the "Dialectic" he built up upon the ground of faith what he had rejected as *Erkenntniss*. In this constructive work he had the Neoplatonic outline in mind.² This resemblance, then, between Kant and Ritschl which one may not fail to observe, and between Luther and Ritschl, is not a resemblance which touches what was characteristic of them, but rather a resemblance due to the Neoplatonic framework to which Christianity early attached itself, and in which form it was handed down through the centuries.

To sum up, then, it may fairly be concluded that the ideas of God entertained by Luther, Kant, and Ritschl are in outline very similar. There is a Neoplatonic background variously modified. Further, Ritschl's relation to the two was somewhat as follows: Ritschl took as material for his concept what he found or thought he found in the Bible, particularly in the New Testament, but he interpreted and grouped this material according to the religious idea that was central in Luther, viz., "the forgiving love of God in Christ." He also appropriated Kant's moral argument for the existence of God, which, in the last analysis, reduces it to assumption. A Kantian influence can also be traced in what Ritschl says of God as a moral world ruler, and also in "value-judgments" either directly from Kant's works to which he refers,

¹ Chapter I., p. 4.

² Paulsen: Seminar on Kant.

or indirectly through Lotze. It is highly probable, also, that Kant, by what he says of God as love, and as Father in his "Religion within the Limits of Mere Reason," contributed somewhat either directly or through Schleiermacher to the emphasis Ritschl laid upon those thoughts already appropriated from the Bible by way of Luther.

In regard to the proportionate Kantian or Lutheran influence, it is maintained here that more weight should be given to the latter by reason of the fact that it was a distinctly religious problem Ritschl felt himself to be at work on, viz., "Justification and Reconciliation," and because of the emphasis which he everywhere lays upon things religious and upon Luther himself. Still further does this view seem justified, since the Kantian contribution in the main affects not so much the content of Ritschl's thought of God as it does its form, or better still, the attitude men should take toward it, that attitude being not dogmatic assertion, but an assumption of faith.

CHAPTER VI.

CONCLUSION.

The immediate point of departure for this dissertation was, as already suggested,¹ the observed resemblances between Kant and Luther. The study which followed revealed the fact that these resemblances are in the main superficial,² and do not indicate a direct influence of the German reformer upon the later philosopher. Indeed, they may be accounted for more naturally as evidence of a common inheritance from historical Christianity, and in Kant's case, from the immediate philosophic and theologic environment. This has been sufficiently dealt with in the third chapter of this dissertation. But this study furnished at the same time the material for an appreciation of the Ritschlian theology.

Exposition should precede criticism. In fact, oftentimes, the best criticism is exposition. The critics of Ritschl, however, have usually failed in their exposition. It has been customary to seize upon the elements of Kant or of Lotze which appear in Ritschl and by emphasizing these to classify him as an adherent of the one or the other of these philosophers or of both. In the main he has been grouped as a Neo-Kantian.³ But this is largely formal criticism. It fails to consider the material with which Ritschl was very evidently familiar.⁴ Still further, in this same

¹ Cf. Chapter III., p. 44.

² Cf. Chapter III., pp. 48, 70.

³ Orr: "Ritschlianism, Expository and Critical Essays," p. 36. Garvie: "The Ritschlian Theology," p. 52. Stählin: "Kant, Lotze, and Ritschl," p. 183. Wenley: "Contemporary Theology and Theism," p. 92. Pfeiderer: "Development of Theology in Germany since Kant," p. 183.

⁴ Ritschl: "Recht u. Ver.," Vol. I. In this work Ritschl covers the whole field of thought upon the problem of reconciliation. This must be considered as a factor apart from the form he may have given his thought. This lay in solution in his mind and determined in large measure the treatment of his problem as it appears in his third volume of the same work.

connection, Ritschl's Erkenntnisstheorie has been magnified beyond measure. It is true that Ritschl treats his theory of knowledge as central,¹ but it was not consciously central with him in the early construction of his work. He backed into his theory, and not until his later editions did it take definite shape.²

Parallel with this tendency of criticism has been another, viz., the effort to minimize Ritschl's connection with Luther,³ though Ritschl himself expressly states that he worked consciously under the influence of Luther.⁴ Fundamental with him, as with Luther, was his own religious life, and he consciously sought to solve the problem of reconciliation in accordance with the religious principles Luther had laid down, the worth of which he too had experienced. To lose sight of this is to fail in one's interpretation of Ritschl.

In this dissertation the Kantian⁵ and Lotzian⁶ elements have not been neglected, though less has been said of Lotze than of Kant. The main purpose has been to show what was most worthful in Luther's thought,⁷ as Luther himself viewed the religious situation, and how Ritschl consciously appropriated this in his concept of God. For though Kantian and Lotzian influences breathe through Ritschl's theology as a whole, it is the elements of Luther, conceiving God, as he did, to be a God of love, that predominate in Ritschl's concept of the Divine Being.

Not criticism but exposition has been to the front in this dissertation. If criticism of Ritschl, however, were to be offered at

¹ Ritschl: "Recht. u. Ver.," III., Eng., pp. 14, 15, 18.

² Otto Ritschl: "Albrecht Ritschls Leben," Vol. II., p. 185.

³ Stählin: "Kant, Lotze, and Ritschl," p. 253. Cf. Note 61, p. 324.

⁴ Cf. Chapter V., p. 94.

⁵ Chapter II. Chapter V., p. 103.

⁶ Chapter V., p. 107.

⁷ Of the criticisms to which the writer has had access none seems to have touched the problem so justly as the one by Professor Swing of Oberlin. He uses the expository method, and emphasizes the elements from Luther. This book, however, did not come into the present writer's hands until this dissertation was about ready for the press. Consequently he disclaims any influence from Professor Swing, but in this disclaimer gives testimony to the worth of his method and results. Working independently both have come to an equal appreciation of method and to results that are similar.

all, it would be for his failure to emphasize morality as an attribute of God. Not that he did not emphasize morality. To affirm that would be to show dense ignorance of Ritschl. But he confined morality, for the most part, to men in their relations with one another. He makes a clear distinction between what is moral and what is religious.¹ The latter has to do with men's attitude toward God and the world, the former with their own relations among themselves. But the concept of God, changing and developing as men in their experiences change and develop, takes its color from just those experiences in an idealized form. Usually the thought of God reacts upon the religious life. If the life has been moral, then that morality idealized and conceived as an attribute of God reacts upon the individuals so as to increase their morality. There thus becomes for the ordinary man a divine sanction, and so long as this is not allowed to crystallize, and so retard human progress, it is of advantage.

As pointed out in the body of the dissertation,² the schoolmen rather slighted the moral attributes of God. Luther laid somewhat more emphasis upon what was moral, but very early in the Lutheran church trouble came from the failure to lay sufficient stress there. The Pietists tried to supply the deficiency, and Kant, growing out of a pietistic circle, and influenced, too, by the English moralists laid emphasis upon this point that was wholesome in the extreme. In so far as Ritschl neglected this, he failed to preserve what Kant had achieved.

It is true that the term "love" upon which Ritschl insisted so strongly may be regarded as containing whatever is moral within itself, as the species has the genus embedded in itself, but the term would not ordinarily be so interpreted. Still further, what Ritschl says about being interested in the doctrine of God only in so far as it has to do with the problem of reconciliation,³ and "love" is the chief attribute for solving that problem, is sufficient to absolve him from the charge of denying morality to

¹ Chapter V., p. 101.

² Chapter I., p. 5.

³ Chapter IV., p. 76.

God, but hardly from the charge of neglect, for his view does seem to be open to misinterpretation through such neglect.

This whole movement, however, which presents itself under the form of the Ritschlian theology, is significant in one or two ways apart from the interest that centers in itself. For one thing, it may be regarded as but a moment in the ever recurring effort men have put forth to gain an adequate conception of God. When religion consists in nothing but magical incantations to increase one's economic well-being, as with the savages of Central Australia, the concept of God is exceedingly vague, indeed, as Lumholtz testifies,¹ absent altogether. But with advance in experience and progress to a higher plane of life, sooner or later the thought of God, or rather, of a god or gods emerges, until ultimately there is a conception that is world-embracing, though the concept of the world itself may be small. But at this stage the conservatism always more or less present in religion makes itself evident and forbids further thought or speculation. The "Golden Age" is said to be in the past. "There were giants in those days, men who could think. We be but a feeble folk without intellectual or physical prowess." Consequently what has been becomes the mold for what is and is to be. And yet here and there an individual has experiences that do not fit any known mold. He is therefore forced to deny his experience, or to doubt the God in whom he had believed, or else construct a new mold, a new conception which will contain his new experience. Out of such experiences, often repeated in the life of the race, is born the thought that God is more than man has ever conceived or dreamed.

"Lo, these are but the outskirts of his ways :
And how small a whisper do we hear of him !" ²

exclaimed Job, as he began to see the solution of the complex problem with which for a long time he had been struggling, antedating in a sense by at least 2000 years Newton as he "picked up pebbles upon the shore of the great ocean of knowledge."

¹ Carl Lumholtz : "Australien de Herbert River," 1888.

² Bible : "Book of Job," 26:14, R. V.

It was just this that was troubling many men in Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and that underlies the efforts of Albrecht Ritschl. With the accumulation of new material it was felt in many quarters that the old molds were inadequate. Gone were the cumbersome crystalline spheres of the Ptolemaic system; gone was the conception of the necessary unity and absoluteness of the Church since the split in Reformation times; gone in part was the older Platonic realism and in its place was the nominalistic Aristotelianism hard pressed by the atomism of Democritus. Men were turning their telescopes upon the heavens and discovering worlds upon worlds and systems upon systems until the brain almost whirled. The conception of force, energy, everywhere pervading the universe, eternal and unchangeable had come upon the horizon of men's thoughts. It is at least very apparent in Kant's "*Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Naturwissenschaften*." A new world had been discovered upon the other side of the globe and men were slowly adjusting themselves to this new conception and all that it implied. And then they were brought face to face with the ordinary Christian conception of God, or more particularly the God portrayed in the Hebrew Scriptures. "Can the God of the universe as we know it to-day," they asked, "be identical with that local national God of the Hebrews, who was jealous, angry, revengeful, repenting of his purposes, and fond of servile, flattering adoration?" Not a few denied that identity and this denial was at the bottom of the Deism in England and elsewhere as already described. The need of the times was a truer, more adequate, indeed larger conception of God within religious circles. The ordinary theological conception with its infinities was indeed large, but even that had been considerably strained with the abundance of new material.

No less pressing was the need when Ritschl wrote. More than a century of the acutest philosophizing that the world, perhaps, had ever known had intervened between the time of the Deists and when Ritschl produced his "*Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*." Life had expanded, grown intenser and richer. Kant had not closed the door upon the thought of God. He had, rather, trans-

ferred that thought to the sphere of faith and practical morality. His successors went beyond him in the extent of their speculations and the largeness of their conceptions. Science in every department had become surer of its method and had accumulated material almost mountain high. If religion were to serve a useful function in society, looking at the problem from Ritschl's point of view, the thought of God must be brought into a correspondence with men's actual world experience.

But how may the thought of God be constructed? There are at least two quite opposite methods of procedure. One may analyze the concept and then by lessening the intention proceed to what is more and more general, until the highest genus, perhaps being, is reached. But that is exceedingly vague, and of it nothing can be predicated but what, too, is equally vague. Omniscience, omnipotence, eternity, etc., may be predicated. But what are they? Simply terms to cover one's ignorance. They are practically nothing but the opposites of what men themselves are. In each case the term infinity is introduced, but there is hardly anything more vague. But the thought of God may be developed in quite a different way. The process is synthetic. Emphasis is laid upon the intention. Mere being may lie in the background and be as extended as the thought of man can reach, but the emphasis is upon the qualities by which that thought is differentiated from other thoughts and made more adequate as a factor in the religious life. It is this method that Ritschl adopted.

In the preceding discussion ¹ the framework of Ritschl's thought was indicated. The progression was as follows: being, spiritual being, personal, particular, father, love. But with Ritschl the framework remained very much in the background. It is hidden, and only with difficulty is to be discovered. The emphasis was upon the thought of love. To Plato, God was "The Good"; to Aristotle, "Pure Thought"; to the Hebrews, "Holiness, Goodness and Might" combined; to some of the schoolmen, arbitrary "Will"; to the thinking world outside of distinctively religious

¹Chapter IV., pp. 75, 82.

circles at the time of the Deists, "Force" ; to Herbert Spencer and those associated with him in thought, "The Great Unknown," but "most like that power which wells up in us as consciousness" ;¹ to Ritschl, Schleiermacher, Kant at times, Luther, Augustine, and Jesus Christ, "Love." It was this latter line of succession that Ritschl completed. To him it seemed that the emphasis should be on the intention rather than on the extension. This he deemed the most adequate way to conceive God to meet the demands which the multiplying experiences and thoughts of modern times make. Whether he succeeded or not it is not the province of this dissertation to discuss. But it may be confidently affirmed that no matter how well he may have solved the problem for the present generation, the same task will confront men again and again in the developing life of the race. Ritschl's solution is but a moment in the complete untangling of all the elements that enter into that problem. Not until all mystery is resolved and all knowledge gained will a completely satisfactory concept be developed.

Another significant matter that discloses itself is the almost indissoluble relation between philosophy and religion. For several decades the conflict between science and religion has been discussed and the difficulty resolved by declaring that there is no opposition between science and religion, but one between science and theology. That dictum one may readily assent to as true. But just as frequently, perhaps, it has been affirmed in some quarters that there is a fundamental disharmony between religion and philosophy. A disharmony does exist between some philosophy and some theology to-day, and has existed many times in the past, but a disharmony or fundamental opposition between philosophy and religion may not be allowed. The two grow from the same root. Philosophy is said to have begun in wonder, and not a few of the best interpreters of religion to-day maintain that it, too, had the same origin, if the magical incantations and other very primitive phases are viewed as simply preparatory stages. A man has a feeling of worship in the presence of the grand and

¹ Herbert Spencer : "Principles of Sociology," Vol. III., p. 171.

sublime. That feeling is not very remote from that other feeling which takes possession of a man when a sense of the mystery of the world weighs upon him and he seeks to resolve the mystery. And further, this closeness of relation is also evident when the religious feeling seeks intellectual expression. Then there results theology or religious philosophy, or ultimately philosophy of religion.

But it is also true that religion does not thrive upon metaphysical abstractions. It is not long before a divergence appears between the religious life and what is thought of that life, and sooner or later this divergence leads to a denial of any proper relations between the two fields. This was at the bottom of Luther's criticism of philosophy. The Church had been surfeited with a garbled philosophy for centuries. Luther cherished the religious aspect of life, he abhorred mere philosophizing. Without seeing the inner harmony, he denounced philosophy in the main and declared that it should have little or nothing to do with religion. Ritschl, too, wished to reduce philosophy to the minimum. He could not, however, escape it altogether, as his use of Aristotle and of Kant shows, but acting in accordance with the intense realism of Lotze he emphasized the facts of life as he found them, and sought to divert attention from the metaphysical background. Such a divorce, however, is not possible. So long as a man feels he will think in some degree, and that very thinking is the first stage of philosophizing. A man might as well try to escape his shadow, as, religious though he be, try to escape philosophy in some form.

But on the other hand it is almost equally as difficult for philosophy to escape religion. There are, it is true, but a few choice souls who ever rise into the empyrean of pure thought and who seek to "live, move and have their being" in that rarefied atmosphere. But the course of history shows that very few of them, if any, become altogether divorced from the life of the religious multitude. So far back as history extends there is an evident interaction between religion and the cultural, economic, moral, and political activities of men, which indeed in the main sum up

all their activities. If attention be confined to historical civilized times in the western world this is plain. There was a definite religious life which characterized the Greeks in the pre-Socratic period and that life among the masses did not cease when later Socrates sought clear concepts, and Plato and Aristotle dealt in ideas and entelechies. The religious life itself was in part responsible for Socrates' death. And further, these thinkers themselves grew out of religious circles, and their thoughts for centuries have been appropriated by religious men and women, though not infrequently much diluted. In more recent times the same thing is clearly evident. The philosophers and theologians of the Middle Ages were the same, and Kant, Fichte, Hegel, Schelling, Berkeley, Priestley and the elder Mill were all of a religious turn of mind, while Herbert Spencer came from Wesleyan stock. Kant, as indicated in the body of this dissertation, came from an especially religious circle, and though he moved out into clear metaphysical thinking he did not withhold his hand from matters of religion as his works show, and the results of his thoughts, together with the thoughts of Fichte, Hegel and Schelling have been appropriated over and over by church theologians in the last century and through these men and other leaders have gradually percolated to people in distinctively religious circles. Luther wished to escape metaphysics, but escape was impossible. His own thought of God had a metaphysical background as already indicated. Ritschl wished to escape the same influence, but vainly. The two go together because of an inner harmony. They have the same material to work on, and though the method of religion is usually denominated faith and revelation, and the method of philosophy admitted to consist simply in the use of reason, in the last analysis they are not far apart.

And here, though predictions are somewhat out of place, a suggestion may be hazarded. Historically considered, religion came first, philosophy next, and science last in order of development. Not infrequently both science and philosophy have denied to religion its right of existence, and, too, science has sneered at philosophy. But philosophy in very recent times has been taking

the results of science and giving to scientists the vision they have sometimes lacked. Is it too much to suppose that ultimately both science and philosophy will contribute to religion so as to give it the form it should properly have? Already much has been accomplished in that very direction, and the rhythm of which Mr. Spencer speaks would seem to point toward the same end.

But speculation and prophecy are not properly within the province of this dissertation. The great problem which Ritschl sought to solve in part for the present generation may be recognized, and also the closeness of relation which apparently necessarily exists between philosophy and religion, but further than that it is not permitted to go.

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